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**Contextual experiences of overseas trained teachers before  
and after obtaining a teaching position in a public  
secondary school of Western Australia and South Australia  
in reference to their cultural perspectives.**

**Submitted by**

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**Master of Arts**

**Bachelor of Education**

**Bachelor of Arts (English Honours)**

**Bachelor of Arts**

**A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF  
THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE DEGREE OF  
DOCTOR OF EDUCATION**

**SCHOOL OF EDUCATION**

**The University of Notre Dame Australia**

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**November, 2016**

### **Statement of Sources**

This thesis does not contain any published or unpublished material for which I was awarded any other degree or diploma. The sources of information from all other authors were duly recognised in the body of the thesis. This thesis was not submitted for examination in any other tertiary institution. This research followed all the rules and guidelines as directed by the University Ethics Committee.

Signed.....

Date.....

## **Acknowledgements**

I wish to extend my heartfelt thanks to the twelve overseas trained teacher participants from Western Australia and South Australia who made this research journey possible. The free and open discussions on many of their professional and personal experiences in the public schools of Australia have enriched this study. The depiction of many of their heartfelt perceptions and opinions introduces the readers to experience the world of overseas trained teachers in the public schools of Western Australia and South Australia.

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## **Abstract**

The focus of this research was an exploration of the experiences of overseas trained teachers in the public secondary schools of Western Australia and South Australia, in reference to their cultural perspectives. Due to ongoing teacher shortage in the Australian public secondary schools (Weldon, 2015) many overseas trained teachers opt to migrate to Australia in the hope of establishing a new teaching career in the country. In the process, overseas trained teachers often undergo a range of contextual experiences, some that are challenging and some rewarding. It becomes meaningful, therefore, to explore the contextual experiences of overseas trained teachers and also examine how their adaptation process to Australian public secondary schools might be affected by their cultural perspectives.

The review of literature highlighted four themes which formed the conceptual framework in this research. These four themes were: contextual experiences of overseas trained teachers prior to obtaining a teaching position in a public secondary school; contextual experiences of overseas trained teachers after obtaining a teaching position in a public secondary school; effects of culture on the adaptation process of overseas trained teachers to the public secondary schools of Australia; and the contribution of overseas trained teachers to the public school sector.

The epistemological approach of this research was that of constructivism. Specifically, an interpretive paradigm with a filter of symbolic interactionism was used to explore the experiences of overseas trained teachers in reference to their cultural perspectives. The chosen methodology for the study was an instrumental case study design. Methods of data collection included in-depth, semi-structured interviews of twelve overseas trained teachers from different backgrounds and researcher generated field notes. Miles and Huberman's (1994) interactive model of data management was used for data display, management and analysis.

Results from this inquiry indicated that overseas trained teachers face multiple contextual challenges, both before and after obtaining a teaching position in a public secondary school. Some of the major challenges faced by overseas trained teachers before obtaining a teaching position in a public secondary school are: lack of in-depth information on post immigration life in Australia; registration delays; and apparent lack of consistency in the teacher orientation process. Some of the challenges faced by overseas trained teachers after obtaining a teaching position in a public secondary school are: apparent lack of effective in-school induction and mentoring; student behaviour management issues; pedagogical and cultural dissonance; and perceived workplace harassment and discrimination. In spite of those challenges, a majority of the overseas trained teachers in the study were grateful for their multiple positive and rewarding experiences in Australia. The data highlighted that the cultural attributes of overseas trained teachers play a significant role on their adaptation process to the Australian public secondary schools. In addition, the data indicated that the challenges experienced by overseas trained teachers are influenced by the level of their familiarity with the Australian culture. Furthermore, the data also indicated that the adaptation process for overseas trained teachers from native English speaking background (NEST) was far less complicated than their counterparts from culturally and linguistically diverse and non-English speaking background (CALD/NESB). Most importantly, the research illustrated that irrespective of circumstances, personal attitude and outlook can play an important role in shaping the professional experiences of overseas trained teachers in the public secondary schools of Western Australia and South Australia.

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# **Chapter One: The Research Defined**

## **1.1 Overseas Trained Teachers**

An overseas trained teacher (OTT) in the Australian context is a person who has been educated and professionally trained in any country other than Australia. Some of these teachers come to Australia from native English speaking countries such as the United Kingdom, the United States of America and Canada. There are other overseas trained teachers who come from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) and non-English speaking backgrounds (NESB). Overseas trained teachers, therefore, are people who are trained overseas, might belong to culturally and linguistically diverse and non-English speaking backgrounds and in most cases have already landed in Australia in search of a new lifestyle (Sharplin, 2009).

Weldon (2015) noted that while Australian public schools are currently experiencing an oversupply of primary school teachers, there is a shortage of secondary teachers in the public school sector. The demand is especially in the teaching areas of Mathematics, Technology, Physics and Chemistry (Weldon, 2015). This situation might well worsen in the coming years as an aging teaching workforce retires from the profession (Education Council, 2014). Authors (Reid & Collins, 2012; Weldon, 2015) observed that the teacher shortages in Australia are mostly in the regional and remote regions of the country.

Due to teacher shortages, an increased number of overseas trained teachers started migrating to Australia at the onset of the 21st century from culturally and linguistically diverse and non-English speaking backgrounds, along with the usual immigrant teachers from the United Kingdom and North America (Reid & Collin, 2012). Researchers (Bella, 1999; Kamler, Reid & Santoro, 1999; Reid, Collins & Singh, 2014) highlight that workplace conditions might be more confronting or difficult for overseas trained teachers in comparison to their locally trained counterparts as it was observed that these teachers had to cope with a variety of contextual challenges. Some of these challenges were lack of sufficient background

information on the teaching position requirements and registration delays (Bella, 1999; Reid. et.al 2014). Other contextual challenges faced by overseas trained teachers included dealing with unaccustomed student behaviour (Kamler, Reid & Santoro, 1999) and issues arising from misunderstanding caused by differences in the accents of overseas trained teachers (Bella, 1999). This research explores the experiences of participating overseas trained teachers, both from native and non-native English speaking countries who chose to work in public secondary schools of Western Australia and South Australia.

## **1.2 Personal Statement**

The motivation behind this research stems from the fact that I am an overseas trained secondary teacher, who came from a culturally and linguistically diverse community and non-English speaking background. I migrated to Australia with fifteen years of teaching experience, both in India, my native country of birth, as well as in Bahrain, where I resided for twelve years. Nonetheless, my initial teaching experience in a rural public secondary school in Western Australia was quite intense as well as life changing in multiple ways. I had to reinvent myself professionally and personally to continue teaching in Australia. All my previous understanding of pedagogy did not prove to be helpful. I had to replace my traditional understanding of classroom expectations to which I was accustomed, with the 'Classroom Culture' (Kato, 2001) of Australian public secondary schools. I realised that a compromise of my professional and personal values and perspectives was needed in order to adjust to the Australian public secondary school system. This experience along with an encouragement from my ex-Principal inspired me to explore the experiences of overseas trained teachers in the public secondary schools of Western Australia and South Australia as my research topic. In addition, I wanted to examine the influences of culture on the adaptation process of overseas trained teachers to the public secondary schools of Western Australia and South Australia.

### **1.3 Purpose of the Research**

The purpose of this research was threefold. Firstly, it was to explore the first hand experiences of overseas trained teachers prior to obtaining a teaching position in an Australian public secondary school. The intention was to acquire an understanding of different barriers and challenges that overseas trained teachers need to negotiate before obtaining a teaching placement. Secondly, it was to look into the different challenges that overseas trained teachers need to confront, after obtaining a teaching position in an Australian public secondary school. The intention was to position the audience to comprehend the various difficulties that overseas trained teachers need to pass through while trying to adjust in a foreign work environment. The third purpose was to explore and interpret the influences of cultural factors in the adjustment process of overseas trained teachers to their new teaching environments. Burnett (1998), is of the opinion that the social and cultural background of immigrants constitutes a significant influence on the settlement process. The same observation might also be applicable to overseas trained teachers.

### **1.4 Context**

Context refers to a description of the setting in which the research was conducted (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008; Miles, Huberman & Saldana, 2014; Punch, 2014). This study included participants who had worked in public secondary schools in Western Australia or South Australia (Figure 1). The description below introduces the two dimensions of the context of this research by outlining the geographical locations and public school systems in these two states.



Figure 1.1: *Australia State Map*. [Source: google.com.au]

The first dimension of the context is the geographical location of Western Australia and its public school system. Western Australia is the largest state in Australia, occupying a third of the continent. It has an area of more than 2500,000 square kilometres and its 12,500 kilometre coastline is Australia's 'face' to the Indian Ocean. Its capital city Perth, is closer to Singapore and Jakarta than to Canberra, the nation's capital and the majority of the population (over four-fifths) live in and around Perth. Perth is one of the most isolated capital cities of the world. Only the narrow Timor Sea separates its northern coastline from the equatorial islands of the Indonesian Archipelago. To the south of Western Australia, is the Southern Ocean and Antarctica (About Australia 1997-2015).

The Department of Education in Western Australia is the largest public sector employer in the state with more than 800 schools in communities across the state, both in bustling cities and regional centres. A number of those schools are located in some of the most remote regions of the world. These remote schools are situated in Goldfields, Pilbara, Mid-West and Kimberley regions of Western Australia. The Education Department of Western Australia proclaims to value the wealth of knowledge and experience that people from different backgrounds bring to the education system. The stated top priority of the Education Department is to make provision for every student to be successful and raise standards of student achievement (Department of Education, Western Australia, 2015).

To be registered as a teacher in Western Australia, overseas trained teachers need to undergo an assessment of their tertiary qualifications by the Teacher Registration Board of Western Australia (TRBWA). In addition, overseas trained teachers also need to meet the teaching prerequisites of the TRBWA, which are: proficiency in prescribed standard in English, both oral and written; demonstration of the Professional Standards for Teachers in Western Australia at the proficient level; fitness and propriety as a teacher; and validation of a teaching experience for at least four years prior to registration (TRBWA, 2015). As of 2015, overseas trained teachers were not subjected to a separate English Language Testing for the purpose of registration, other than evidencing desirable bands in the International English Language Testing System (IELTS), which is part of the immigration process itself.

The second dimension of the context is the geographical location of South Australia and its public school system. South Australia is the southern central state of mainland Australia. It borders all other mainland states and the Northern Territory and it covers a large area. The state has an area similar in size to Egypt, the Canadian state of Ontario, or the combined areas of France and Germany. Its landscape varies from rugged outback wilderness and desert to scenic mountain ranges and the state's coastline stretches more than 3,700 kilometres. Its populated areas range from the cosmopolitan capital, Adelaide, to large regional centres and many outback



Australian towns. The state's population of over 1.65 million people is made up of over 200 ethnic communities (Government of South Australia, 2015).

As of the latest updated published list in March 2015, there were 523 South Australian Government schools (Australian Education Union, South Australia, personal correspondence, 01/3/2016). Unlike Western Australia, the South Australian government strongly recommends all teachers seeking employment with the Department of Education and Child Development (DECD) obtain a First-Aid qualification, along with other requirements needed to qualify to teach in secondary public schools in the state. The Department for Education and Child Development (DECD) is responsible for a range of multi-disciplinary services for the benefit of South Australian families, children and young people. The stated aim of the Department is to support every family so all young South Australians from 0-18 years of age have the opportunity to become happy, healthy and safe members of the community (South Australia Department of Education and Child Development, 2015).

To be registered as a teacher in South Australia, overseas trained teachers need to undergo an assessment of their tertiary qualifications through the Teacher Registration Board of South Australia (TRB, South Australia). In addition, overseas trained teachers also need to meet other prerequisites of the TRB of South Australia, which are: completion of the Mandatory Notification Training (MNT) on child abuse; demonstration of fitness and propriety to work as a teacher; successful completion of an English Language Testing proving competence in the language; and validation of least four years of teaching experience prior to registration (Teacher Registration Board of South Australia, 2015).

## **1.5 Identification of Research Question**

This research sought to investigate three research questions:

1. What are the contextual experiences faced by overseas trained teachers prior to obtaining a teaching position in a public secondary school of Western Australia and South Australia?
2. What are the contextual experiences faced by overseas trained teachers after obtaining a teaching position in a public secondary school of Western Australia and South Australia?
3. How do overseas trained teachers' cultural values and perspectives affect their adjustment processes to the public secondary schools of Western Australia and South Australia?

## **1.6 Significance of the Research**

The significance of this research is threefold. Firstly, the research provides an insight into the experiences of participant overseas trained teachers prior to obtaining a teaching position in a public secondary school of Western Australia and South Australia. Secondly, the research considers different challenges and issues that overseas trained teachers may confront after obtaining a teaching position in a public secondary school. Such information has the potential to prepare future aspiring overseas teachers physically and psychologically for their teaching responsibilities in Australian public secondary schools. Thirdly, the research explores the effects of cultural attributes on the adaptation process of overseas trained teachers to the public secondary schools of two Australian states. In this respect, the data from this research might be capable of providing an understanding of the effects of core cultural values and beliefs on the professional lives of overseas trained teachers. This understanding might help policy makers to establish and implement strategic plans for professional development programs to support the smooth transition, adaptation and retention of overseas trained teachers in the public secondary schools of Western Australia and South Australia. The awareness of cultural variables on professional lives might help local communities understand and relate to overseas trained teachers more effectively.

## 1.7 The Research Participants

The research participants were chosen from different countries and backgrounds. Participant selection for this research involved a non-probabilistic "purposeful sampling" (Patton, 2001). For example, the participants were chosen from different ethnicities, work locations and included both females and males of various age groups. The chosen participants had taught in one of the two states of Western Australia or South Australia. Out of the twelve participants, eight came from different culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) and non-English speaking backgrounds (NESB), while four were from native English speaking backgrounds (NEST). The following table introduces the research participants.

Table 1.1

### *Overview of Overseas Trained Teachers Participants*

Participant Pseudonym	Country of Origin	Gender	State	Age Group
1. Ali (NESB & CALD)	Iraq	Male	WA	30-40 Years
2. Leyla (NESB & CALD)	Iran	Female	WA	50+ Years
3. Steven (NESB & CALD)	Zimbabwe	Male	SA	30-40 Years
4. Monaco (NESB & CALD)	Japan	Female	SA	30-40 Years
5. Nadjuhin (NESB & CALD)	Russia	Female	WA	30-40 Years
6. Rumi (NESB & CALD)	India	Female	WA	20-30 Years

7. Hayat (NESB &CALD)	Eritrea	Male	WA	30-40 Years
8. Lawrence (NESB & CALD)	Seychelles	Male	WA	30-40 Years
9. Alice (Native speaker)	Canada	Female	WA	20-30 Years
10. Barbara (Native Speaker)	Ireland	Female	SA	50+ Years
11. Bob (Native speaker)	South Africa	Male	WA	30-40 Years
12. Anne (Native Speaker)	England	Female	WA	50+ Years

## 1.8 Outline of the Research Design

The epistemological approach of this research is constructivist in nature. This constructivist research used interpretivism, with a filter of symbolic interactionism as its theoretical perspective. An instrumental case study is the chosen methodology, as it provides a general understanding of a phenomenon using a particular case (Harling, 2012). Specifically, the instrumental case study explored the contextual experiences of twelve overseas trained teachers in reference to their cultural attribute.

Data were collected through the use of in-depth semi-structured interviews and researcher generated field notes. The data were managed and analysed by using Miles and Huberman's interactive model (Miles & Huberman, 1994). This model consisted of three main components: data reduction; data display; and drawing and verifying conclusions. An interview guide (Appendix A) was used as the basis for

the interviews. The interviews were recorded and transcribed verbatim by me. The participants later validated my interpretation of the data. My field notes were written during and after the interviews, which provided additional information on the participants' responses. Data were displayed and analysed under three themes: contextual experiences of overseas trained teachers before obtaining a teaching position in a public secondary school; contextual experiences of overseas trained teachers after obtaining a teaching position in a public secondary school; and the effects of cultural attributes on the adaptation process of overseas trained teachers to the public secondary schools of Western Australia and South Australia.

### **1.9 Limitations of the Research**

There were two limitations of this research. The first limitation was that I myself am an overseas trained secondary teacher who had to undergo similar contextual experiences to those of the research participants from culturally and linguistically diverse and non-English speaking backgrounds (CALD/NESB). There might have been a presence of bias towards different aspects of the participants' experiences. I was well aware of this fact and to counteract this limitation, I audiotaped the participants as they described their experiences, while also recording my own observations of the participants in a journal while conducting the interviews. I later validated my interpretation of the narrative synopses with the participants.

The second limitation has to do with the number of participants in the research. There were twelve overseas trained teacher participants. I was aware of the fact that the number of participants was limited, so I employed purposeful maximum variation sampling (Patton, 1990) when recruiting participants. As was previously mentioned, I negotiated interviews with overseas trained teachers from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds. The participants were chosen from different countries, levels of experience, both genders and different cultures. Three of the participants worked in remote locations; five in rural schools and four others in metropolitan schools. The participants were purposefully chosen from the two states of Western Australia and South Australia, to provide a representative snapshot of overseas trained teachers

from different countries and cultures that come to work as teachers in secondary public schools of Australia.

## **1.10 Definitions**

### *1.10.1 Overseas Trained Teachers*

An overseas trained teacher (OTT) in the Australian context is a person who has been educated and professionally trained in any country other than Australia and has chosen to teach in Australia (teach. NSW). As was evidenced in this research, some of these teachers might have to further their education in Australia before entering the teaching workforce.

### *1.10.2 Teachers from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse and Non-English Speaking Background*

A teacher from a culturally and linguistically diverse and non-English speaking background (CALD/NESB) is a person who was born and raised in a country and an ethnic community different from the Australian culture. English is not these teachers' first language, but in order to teach in Australia, they have to show high competence in English through a successful completion of the International English language Testing (IELTS). Most of these teachers speak multiple languages.

### *1.10.3 Native English Speaking Teachers*

A Native English Speaking Teacher (NEST) in the Australian context is a person who was born and educated in an English speaking country, other than Australia. In spite of being native speakers, these teachers need to prove high competence in English through the International English Language Testing (IELTS) as part of their Australian immigration requirements.

#### *1.10.4 International English Language Testing System (IELTS)*

The International English Language Testing System (IELTS) is accepted as evidence of English language proficiency for study, work and migration in Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the United Kingdom, as well as for study and work in the United States of America. Each country sets its own IELTS requirements. There are two versions of the IELTS- General and Academic. IELTS Academic is required for people planning to study in higher education or seeking professional registration. Overseas trained teachers have to qualify Academic IELTS for migration purposes (IELTS, 2016).

#### *1.10.5 Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR)*

Entry into the public universities in Western Australia is a matching process of the people who want to go to university and the number of places that are available. To assist in this process, Year 12 students are ranked and places offered on the basis of this ranking. An ATAR ranges between 99.95 and zero, and reports a student's rank position relative to all other students. It takes into account the number of students who sit the Western Australian Certificate of Education (WACE) examinations in any year and also the number of people of Year 12 school leaving age in the total population (Tertiary Institutions Service Centre, 2015).

### **1.11 Outline of the thesis**

The structure of the thesis consists of six chapters. Table 1.2 provides an overview of this structure.

Table 1.2

*Overview of the thesis structure*

Chapter	Title
Chapter 1	The Research Defined

Chapter 2	Review of Literature
Chapter 3	Research Plan
Chapter 4	Presentation of Results
Chapter 5	Discussion of Results
Chapter 6	Review and Conclusions

## 1.12 Chapter Outlines

Chapter 1, 'The Research Defined' introduces the research. This chapter starts by providing an understanding of overseas trained teachers, a personal statement from me and an outline of the purpose and the context of the research, which leads to the identification of the research questions. This discussion is followed by a consideration of the significance of the research. The research design, data analysis and a reflection on the known limitations of the research are then summarised. The chapter concludes with relevant definitions and an outline of the thesis.

Chapter 2, 'The Literature Review' discusses the body of knowledge on the experiences of overseas trained teachers as observed by researchers in national and international contexts. Firstly, the review considers issues that overseas trained teachers might face prior to obtaining a teaching position in a public school. Secondly, the review of literature explores the experiences of overseas trained teachers after obtaining a teaching position in a public school. Thirdly, the review considers the effects of immigrants' cultural values on their adaptation process. Lastly, the review outlines the positive contribution of overseas trained teachers to the public school sector. These themes bring into focus the conceptual framework that underpins the inquiry.

Chapter 3, 'Research Plan', explains the research design used in this study. The reasons for selecting an epistemological approach based on constructivist research are delineated, followed by an explanation for adopting an interpretivist perspective



for this study. The chapter then discusses the methodology, method, the research participants, measures for ensuring trustworthiness of the study and the process of data analysis. The chapter concludes with an ethical consideration to enhance the authenticity of the research followed by a design summary for the study.

Chapter 4, 'Presentation of Results', displays data under three specific research questions. For each research question, data are displayed according to the emerging themes. The three research questions are: a) What are the contextual experiences faced by overseas trained teachers prior to obtaining a teaching position in a public secondary school of Western Australia and South Australia? b) What are the contextual experiences faced by overseas trained teachers after obtaining a teaching position in a public secondary school of Western Australia and South Australia? c) How do overseas trained teachers' cultural values and perspectives affect their adjustment processes to the public secondary schools of Western Australia and South Australia? Data display under each research question is followed by a first level of analysis.

Chapter 5, 'Discussion of Results', provides an interpretive discussion of data displayed in Chapter Four. The data for each of the three questions are analysed in conjunction with a consideration of relevant literature in the field. Discussions focused around analysing data on contextual experiences of overseas trained teachers before obtaining a teaching position in a public secondary school; contextual experiences of overseas trained teachers after obtaining a teaching position in a public secondary school; and the effects of culture on the adaptation process of overseas trained teachers to the public secondary schools of Western Australia and South Australia.

Chapter 6, 'Review and Conclusions' reviews and interprets the results of this study in the light of the stated purpose of the inquiry. Following a restatement of the research design each of the three specific research questions is answered. This is followed by discussions of the benefits and shortcomings of the research design and

knowledge that this research added to the field of study. A conclusion of the research is then presented. Lastly, implications for the profession are addressed along with suggestions for further research. The chapter concludes with a personal impact statement from me.

## **Chapter Two: Review of Literature**

### **2.1 Introduction**

The purpose of this research was threefold. Firstly, it was to explore the first hand experiences of overseas trained teachers prior to obtaining a teaching position in an Australian public secondary school. The intention was to acquire an understanding of different barriers and challenges that overseas trained teachers need to negotiate before obtaining a teaching placement in an Australian public secondary School. Secondly, it was to examine the different challenges that overseas trained teachers might confront after obtaining a teaching position in an Australian public secondary school. The intention was to position the reader to comprehend the various challenges that overseas trained teachers experience while trying to adjust in a foreign work environment. The third purpose was to explore and interpret the influences of cultural factors on the adjustment process of overseas trained teachers to their new teaching environments. The intention was to delve into the effects of the cultural attributes of overseas trained teachers on their adaptation process to the Australian public secondary schools. It seemed appropriate, therefore, to review literature on the following four themes: contextual experiences of overseas trained teachers prior to obtaining a teaching position in a public school; contextual experiences of overseas trained teachers after obtaining a teaching position in a public school; effects of immigrants' cultural values on their adaptation process; and the contribution of overseas trained teachers to the public school sector.

The review of literature on contextual experiences of overseas trained teachers prior to obtaining a teaching position in a public school focused on the areas of availability of background information prior to arrival (Manik, 2007; Reid & Collins, 2012); registration process and English language testing (Bella, 1999; Reid & Collins, 2007, 2012); country posting (Reid, Collins & Singh, 2010) and induction programs (Bella, 1999; Reid, Collins & Singh, 2010). The review of literature on experiences of overseas trained teachers after obtaining a teaching position in a public school concentrated on the following areas: pedagogical dissonance and disparity in teaching methods (Bella, 1999; Hutchison, 2005; Kato, 2001); language

and communication (Bella, 1999, Hutchison & Jazzar, 2007); difference in curriculum (Bella, 1999; De Soyza, West & Jones,n.d); mentoring (Hans & Singh, 2007; Reid, Collins & Singh, 2010); behaviour management (Kamler, Santoro & Reid, 1998; Terry, 1998); racism, xenophobia and ignorance in school communities (Coles & Stuart, 2005; Santoro, 1997); stress and declining morale (the educator, April, 2015; BBC, April, 2015; (training.com.au, April, 2015); and positive experiences and outcomes (Reid, Collins & Singh, 2007).

The review of literature on the effects of immigrants' cultural values on their adaptation process discussed the impact of culture on the adjustment process of migrants (Burnett, 1998; Miller, 2008). Overseas trained teachers as migrants may experience similar effects of cultural values on their adaptation process as that of other immigrants. Lastly, the review of literature on the contribution of overseas trained teachers towards the public education sector considered ways in which overseas teachers have enriched the public education, both nationally and internationally (Bella, 1999, Miller, 2008, Vandeyer et al, 2014). While the review of the literature indicated that overseas trained teachers faced many challenges before and after obtaining a teaching position in an Australian public school, the literature also indicated that overseas trained teachers experienced a range of positive and rewarding experiences (Castro. et.al, 2010, Reid, Collins and Singh, 2010). Table 2.1 outlines the review of literature.

Table 2.1

*Outline of Review of Literature*

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**2.1 Introduction**

**2.2 Contextual Framework**

**2.3 Contextual Experiences of Overseas Trained Teachers prior to obtaining a teaching position in a public school**

**2.4 Summary**

**2.5 Contextual Experiences of Overseas Trained Teachers after obtaining a**

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**teaching position in a public school**

**2.6 Summary**

**2.7 Effects of immigrants' cultural values on their adaptation process**

**2.8 Summary**

**2.9 Contribution of Overseas Trained Teachers towards the public school sector**

**2.10 Summary**

**2.11 Conclusion**

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## **2.2 Conceptual Framework**

The interweaving of the four themes outlined in Table 2.1 put into focus the conceptual framework that paved the foundation for this research. The conceptual framework presented, illustrates the components of the literature underpinning the research. The four themes directly influence the central theme of the research: the contextual experiences of overseas trained teachers before and after obtaining a teaching position in a public school and the effects of culture on the adaptation process of overseas trained teachers to the public schools of Western Australia and South Australia. The literature presented on contextual experiences of overseas trained teachers prior to obtaining a teaching position in a public school highlighted four common challenges that teachers might face before obtaining a teaching position at a public school. Literature on contextual experiences of overseas trained teachers after obtaining a teaching position in a public school identified nine experiences that were common for overseas trained teachers in their new workplaces after obtaining teaching placements. Literature on the effects of immigrants' cultural values on their adaptation process discussed how subjective cultural traits could affect the adaptation process of immigrants and by implication also, overseas trained teachers. Finally the literature on the contribution of overseas trained teachers to the public school sector discussed the various ways in which overseas trained teachers contributed to the public education system. Figure 2.1 illustrates the conceptual framework of this study.



Figure 2.1 *Conceptual Framework underpinning the literature on Overseas Trained Teachers.*

Due to a lack of a significant body of recent literature on the experiences of overseas trained teachers (Reid & Collins, 2015), a number of sources that were used in the review of the literature are dated. However, older sources were taken into consideration as they are still applicable to the current (as of 2015) public school environment, both in Australia and abroad. This perception is indicated by the fact that some of those previous observations (Bella, 1999; Evans & Northcott, 1999; Lee, 1966; Metais, 1992; Terry, 1998; Weintroub, 1993) on contextual issues of overseas trained teachers still match with observations made by more recent sources

(ACER, 2014; ACER, 2014; BBC, 2015; Castro et.al, 2010; Murray, Riazi & Cross, 2012; Oloo, 2015; Roddick, 2010).

While the research concentrated specifically on the experiences of overseas trained teachers in public secondary schools, this review of literature encompassed available studies on these teachers' experiences in public education. The intention was to provide a bigger picture of overseas trained teachers' experiences in public schools, both in Australia and abroad. Furthermore, some sections discussed in this review of literature were common to all teachers, both local and overseas trained. These sections are: registration process, country posting, teacher orientation and induction programs, behaviour management, mentoring and stress due to declining morale. The literature pertaining to these sections did not relate specifically to overseas trained teachers, but were still taken into consideration, as the severity of those issues affects the adaptation process of overseas trained teachers to the public secondary schools of Australia. The results in this research and my own experience as an overseas trained teacher in a public secondary school confirm their applicability to this review of literature.

### **2.3 Contextual experiences of overseas trained teachers prior to obtaining a teaching position in a public school**

The literature on contextual experiences of overseas trained teachers prior to obtaining a teaching position in a public school dealt with a discussion on four experiences that overseas trained teachers might encounter before obtaining a teaching position in a public school. These four experiences were outlined in Table 2.2

Table 2.2

*Experiences of overseas trained teachers prior to obtaining a teaching position in a public school*

<b>2.3.1 The availability of background information prior to arrival</b>
<b>2.3.2 Registration Process and English Language Testing</b>
<b>2.3.3 Country Posting</b>
<b>2.3.4 Teacher orientation Programs</b>

### *2.3.1 The availability of background information prior to arrival*

Reid and Collins (2012) observed that not much information was readily available to aspiring overseas trained teachers before migrating to Australia. Misinformation was also a significant problem. These researchers noted that many overseas trained teachers claimed they did not have access to all the facts, processes, procedures, red tape and institutional hurdles that lay before them prior to their arrival in Australia. The overseas trained teachers also observed that recruitment websites did not contain clear information. Reid and Collins (2012) noticed that while their research was in progress, all Australian states adjusted their websites to include information on experiences of overseas teachers including narratives and video-clips of immigrant teachers.

Overseas trained teachers had similar experiences in different other countries. For example, Manik (2007) recorded initial experiences of South African teachers who migrated to the United Kingdom. These overseas trained teachers complained that important information on everyday life was missing from the recruiting websites. Those overseas trained teachers indicated that there was little or no information on accommodation, healthcare, transportation, food costs, phone services and many other general factors that affected their everyday lives. Manik (2007) reported that all these factors caused significant confusion and stress to overseas trained teachers as they moved to a foreign country. In addition, in the United States of America, there were reports of unscrupulous recruitment agencies



illegally charging huge sums of money from Filipino teachers. The complaint depicted that a firm forced some overseas trained teachers to sign illegal contracts under duress, requiring payment of fees that federal law dictated should be otherwise paid by the employers (Report finds abuses in overseas recruitment, 2009).

Researchers have provided recommendations to counter the issue of insufficient background information received by migrant teachers. Jhagroo (2004) as quoted in Biggs (2010), recommended that overseas trained teachers should visit the proposed country of immigration at least once beforehand. This exercise might assist the migrating overseas trained teachers to get a feel for the people and the country in general. In the process, aspiring overseas trained teachers might also be able to evaluate the education system of their proposed country of immigration and make an informed decision about immigrating. Specific recommendations were given explicitly for Australian schools in the final 'Globalisation and Teacher Movements' research report (Reid, Collins & Singh, 2010). The first recommendation of the report focused on creating increasing transparencies in the migration policies and encouraging overseas teacher migrants to understand the realities of working in Australia. The report also suggested provisions for extending personalised connections and support to address any problem that migrant teachers might encounter across all areas of their personal and professional lives, particularly during their first six months in Australia. Bella (1999) made some recommendations for the benefit of overseas trained teachers in Queensland. She encouraged the Board of Teacher Registration of Queensland to develop an information kit for overseas trained teachers, which might include information on syllabus, curriculum requirements and the education system, procedure to apply for teaching positions, details of the duties and responsibilities of teachers and avenues of available support.

Niyubahwe et. al (2013) recorded that for faster professional integration of overseas trained teachers in Ontario, Canada, the education authorities decided to provide supplementary funding to cover subsistence and childcare fees during the teachers' university studies. These scholars also noticed that in the United States, certain training programs took into consideration the needs of the immigrant teachers

in order to help them reconcile work and studies. In some school districts of the United States, the community and the university worked in close collaboration to select candidates and guide them through programs. Some overseas trained teachers followed part-time courses during three semesters in a program spanning over two years that allowed them to continue studies while still supporting their families. Niyubahwe et. al (2013) also noted that in Israel, overseas teachers were required to take shorter courses for ten months to achieve the required skills to teach in local schools. These recommendations might also be replicated in Australian states for the support of overseas trained teachers.

### *2.3.2 Registration Process and English Language Testing*

Registration experiences of immigrant teachers varied throughout Australia, as each state had its own recruitment policy (Reid, Collins & Singh, 2010). Reid, Collins and Singh (2010) observed that as a result of this situation, there was an emergence of a form of labour market failure that impeded the ease by which immigrant teachers entered and taught in Australian schools. These authors noted that teachers that were registered in any one of the Australian states did not get an automatic recognition or acceptance in other states. If teachers wanted to work interstate, they had to apply through the registration board of the concerned state to obtain permission to teach. While this situation was applicable to all teachers, both local and overseas trained, it had the potential to be more stressful for overseas trained teachers trying to commence their professional careers in Australia.

As far back as 1999, Bella observed that overseas trained teachers in Queensland schools considered obtaining registration and initial employment as their biggest hurdle. The teachers were unhappy about the 'wait' time to obtain their teacher registration. Bella (1999) also observed that many teachers felt that there was discrimination shown against teachers from overseas, particularly for teachers from non-English speaking backgrounds and this perception was evident from the delay in the registration process. These teachers from culturally and linguistically diverse and non-English speaking backgrounds observed that there was an inbuilt lack of

acceptance of overseas trained teachers in the education community of Queensland (Bella, 1999).

Achieving the required standards of English language proficiency for teacher registration could prove to be an immense challenge to some overseas trained teachers as quite often the registration board might ask for native-like proficiency in English (Murray & Cross, 2009). Many overseas trained teachers found it hard to meet that requirement, mainly due to their varying accents. The Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership Limited defined English language proficiency as “achievement of a level of professional proficiency in spoken and written English” (AITSL, 2014). According to AITSL (2014), English language proficiency of overseas teachers in Australia could be assessed through the International English Language System (IELTS), International Second Language Proficiency Ratings (ISLPR) or Professional English Assessment for Teachers (PEAT). South Australia offered overseas trained teachers full registration after a successful completion of one of the above mentioned tests (TRBSA, 2015). Western Australia accepted desirable bands of 7.5 and 8 in International English Language Testing System (IELTS) or Professional English Assessment for Teachers (PEAT) (TRBWA, 2015).

New South Wales, had a very strict recruitment procedure when it came to the assessment of overseas trained teachers. In New South Wales, overseas trained teachers had to pass the Professional English Assessment for Teachers (PEAT), in order to obtain a teacher registration. This experience could be very lengthy and stressful for overseas trained teachers (Murray, Riazi & Cross, 2012). The Professional English Assessment for Teachers (PEAT) was first introduced in New South Wales in 1996 and was again redesigned in 2007. The Education Department of New South Wales assessed overseas trained teachers for teaching positions only if they could show native-like proficiency in English through PEAT (Murray & Cross, 2009). However, from October 2014, some changes in policies were put in place (Accreditation of Initial Teacher Education Programs in NSW: Policy and Procedures, 2015). According to the changes, in order to start working as a teacher in New South Wales, an overseas trained teacher had to be accredited by the Board of

Studies, Teaching and Educational Standards (BOSTES). In order to be accredited to teach in a New South Wales school, an overseas trained teacher must hold a recognised qualification and might also be required to pass an English language proficiency test at the discretion of the BOSTES. Overseas trained teachers, then had to complete a 10 hour refresher course during their first year of provisional accreditation (teach. NSW, n.d.).

Similar scenarios regarding overseas trained teacher registration requirements could also be found internationally. For example, in the United Kingdom many foreign trained teachers had unfortunately discovered only after migration, that they needed to obtain "Qualified Teacher Status" within 4 years of their residence in the country. Failing to achieve "Qualified Teacher Status" within the given timeframe could lead to the teachers' loss of their work permit (Refugees into teaching information, 2013). Registration discrepancy issues were also observed in New Zealand. Dewar and Visser (2000) noted that in New Zealand, principals and overseas trained teachers indicated that varying policies of the New Zealand Qualification Authority, the Teachers' Registration Board and the New Zealand Immigration Service could delay overseas trained teacher recruitment. Niyubahwe et. al (2014) observed that in Ontario, Canada, teachers had to pay \$250 for obtaining equivalencies for their diplomas. Often the wait time was quite prolonged, during which, the teachers had to survive on bare minimum wages. These wages did not allow them to save enough to pay for their documentation. Many overseas teachers thought that volunteering could be the best way to gain teaching experience in Canada. Even then, they had difficulty in finding schools that could provide them opportunities to prove themselves. However, as discussed before, the Canadian government is currently (as of 2015) running programs to help teachers in these situations. Schmidt et.al (2010) noted that many overseas teachers believed that over qualification might prevent them from getting an employment. He recorded that an overseas trained teacher concealed her Master's diploma and extensive teaching experience, just to obtain a teaching position. This overseas teacher believed that her native diploma and experience could decrease her chances of being hired, as she was entitled to a higher salary (Schmidt et.al, 2010).

In Australia, researchers made suggestions to improve the registration and English language testing requirements for overseas trained teachers. One of the suggestions from the 'Globalisation and Teachers movement' research report (Reid, Collins & Singh, 2010) was to streamline teacher registration, recruitment and induction processes throughout the states and territories of Australia to improve teacher mobility. These recommendations had the potential to help overseas trained teachers in multiple ways. Consistent, regularised registration criteria in all states would help overseas trained teachers to be mentally prepared beforehand for meeting their registration requirements. Mutual acceptance of registered teachers from other states could facilitate interstate teacher mobility without unnecessary delays. Bella (1999) encouraged the Queensland state government to consider providing English language programs for overseas teachers at an advanced level. All these recommendations, if implemented, might have the potential to ease the stress of overseas trained teachers in relation to varied registration and English language testing policies of Australian states.

### *2.3.3 Country postings*

Many overseas trained teachers found it necessary to take up initial country postings, as these positions were more readily available compared to ones in metropolitan schools. The reasons for ongoing country vacancies were multiple. The most prominent reason was that the regional lifestyle in Australia appeared not to be a desirable option for many local teachers. Moreover, Lonsdale and Ingvarson (2003) observed that "some schools in remote and rural areas find it hard to attract teachers"(p. 12). Reid and Collins (2012) observed that many local teachers became reluctant to take up teaching positions in remote areas of Australia. Due to the practical difficulties of sending staff to remote locations, even the Schools of Education found it hard to place student teachers in country schools (Lonsdale and Ingvarson, 2003). As a result of these situations, there were ongoing staff shortages in many rural and remote areas of Australia (Lonsdale & Ingvarson, 2003). In particular, Reid, Collins and Singh (2012) observed that in Western Australia, it had become increasingly difficult to place and retain a steady education workforce in rural or remote locations. Overseas trained teachers were often required to fill in

these readily available gaps between demand and supply of teaching staff in the rural and remote regions of Australia to commence their teaching careers (Reid, Collins & Singh, 2012).

Australian states sponsored immigrant teachers under the Regional Sponsorship Migration Scheme, which fell under visa subclass 187 (Australian Government, Department of Immigration and Border Protection, 2015). The Regional Sponsorship Migration Scheme was an incentive extended to new migrants by the Australian government in the hope of solving the ongoing shortage of skilled workforce in its regional areas. Reid and Collins (2012) observed that many overseas trained teachers were forced to take up country postings to begin their new teaching careers in Australia. This situation could lead these teachers live a secluded and isolated life, away from the mainstream community. Furthermore, this situation added extra stress on the teachers' adaptation process to Australian public schools. Working in regional Australia could increase culture shock in overseas trained teachers, due to differences in culture, communication and the necessity to deal with extreme climates (Collins & Reid, 2012). In Australia, even though overseas trained teachers took up country positions for a variety of reasons, their services were not always valued in the country regions of the nation. 'The Globalisation and Teacher Movements' research report (Reid, Collins & Singh, 2010) observed that there was a perception amongst some immigrant teachers that overseas trained teachers were discriminated against, especially in terms of promotional opportunities, access to professional development and many other aspects of school life. They were often looked at as transient staff in the context of hard-to-staff schools, both in country and metro areas. The report advised the school community against such practice.

In spite of the drawbacks, overseas trained teachers could often find the offer of country incentives very useful, especially at the beginning of their professional career in Australia. The Education Departments within the Australian states often granted offers of permanent placements and financial incentives for teachers taking up country positions. Lonsdale and Ingvarson (2003) recorded that according to the Remote Teaching Service Program of Western Australia, all teachers could gain

permanency after two years of service in a remote school. Other benefits included free accommodation, supplied by the Government Employees Housing Authority. Furthermore, after three years of service in a remote location, teachers could be entitled to take ten weeks of additional leave. After four years of service, the offer increased to twenty-six weeks of paid leave. Teachers in remote schools also earned bonus transfer points and were given priority over other candidates for departmental transfer to metropolitan schools. In addition to the promise of permanency with the department, teachers were also offered substantial financial incentive for taking up teaching positions in rural and remote regions of Western Australia. Lonsdale and Ingvarson (2003) observed that "financially, teachers in Rating 1 schools, which are the most remote, are given an extra \$11,500 on top of their salaries, teachers in Rating 2 schools receive \$10,000 and teachers in Rating 3 schools receive an extra \$8,500"(p. 26). These incentives were presented per year and could seem very generous offers to teachers, especially those from overseas, trying to resettle in Australia.

Unfortunately, some teachers, both local and overseas trained discovered that at least in Western Australia, promises of permanency extended by the Education Department to teachers may not be entirely true. In an online blog published on 5th September, 2014, entitled "Western Australia: teachers' stories-Bad Apple Bullies," it was observed that in spite of the promises made by the Western Australian Government, some teachers found that the Government had chosen to make sudden changes to the above mentioned rules on unconditional permanency. Many teachers who took up country positions to achieve permanency after three years (two years for remote services) discovered that due to a sudden change of rules by the Education Department of Western Australia, the Government may not feel obliged to follow through their promises. These teachers indicated that they were considering a class action against the Western Australian Government at that time. Some other teachers working in remote or regional schools in Western Australia, had begun to warn colleagues that the Western Australian Education Department's promise of returning those teachers to metropolitan schools was nothing but "false advertising" (Western Australia: teachers' stories-Bad Apple Bullies, 5 September, 2014). These teachers were even informed by the Education Department of Western Australia to

continue with their services at their given locations or resign (Western Australia: teachers' stories-Bad Apple Bullies, 5 September, 2014). My own experience, as well as data gathered from research participants, indicated that the situation might have been more critical for overseas trained teachers trying to establish themselves in a foreign land.

Similar experiences on relocation were found in the experiences of immigrant teachers in South Africa. South Africa received a number of experienced immigrant teachers from other countries of Africa, who relocated to South Africa in search of stability and better employment opportunities. Vandeyar et al (2014) observed that in South Africa many Zimbabwean teachers were separated from their families, as in some situations the husbands received permit (compulsory documentation to teach in South Africa), but the wives did not, resulting in a forced separation of families. Permanent and ongoing employment were given to indigenous South African teachers, who were often less qualified and experienced than other immigrant teachers in South Africa. Immigrant teachers observed that this kind of regulation affected their well being and caused enormous stress in their lives.

#### *2.3.4 Teacher orientation programs*

Effective orientation and ongoing support for all teachers "was critical for the teachers themselves, the schools in which they teach, the communities in which they play a significant role, and for the students whose futures they shape" (Blueprint for government schools in Victoria, 2005, p. 6). Teacher orientation programs in Australia are state specific. As Reid and Collins (2012) observed, teacher orientation programs varied between the various Australian states. Some Australian states had specified teacher orientation programs for overseas trained teachers such as Queensland, while others like New South Wales had a general orientation for all new teachers. In this regard, Hudson, et.al (2009) recommended that new professionals, both overseas trained and beginner teachers in Australian schools did not have the expertise, practice skills or knowledge like that of other experienced members of staff in the education system. An organised, consistent and ongoing support might be



desirable in order to assist the new professionals to commence and successfully retain their teaching careers in Australia.

New South Wales had its own orientation program for new teachers. Hudson et. al (2009) observed that in New South Wales support for new teachers, both local and overseas trained, was provided in the form of websites with reference to school-based teacher orientation programs. These programs were developed and implemented at the discretion of school principals. Hudson et.al (2009) also noted that similar teacher orientation programs were found in other states, but there was little or no mention of how these programs might be funded or monitored by the Education Departments of various states and territories.

In 1999, the Queensland government took an initiative for providing teacher orientation, which included suitable work-shadowing programs for overseas trained teacher applicants from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds (Implementation of Multicultural Queensland Policy, 1999). Support networks for overseas-trained teacher applicants were established to provide assistance with recruitment and selection, communication or language difficulties and behaviour management programs. This initiative operated with the collaboration of Board of Teacher Registration and tertiary institutions, towards recognising the qualifications and prior learning of overseas trained teachers. In addition, the Government of Queensland also promoted the "Under the Skin: Combating Racism in Schools" professional development package, which was a drive to counter racism in schools. The initiative facilitated access to employment opportunities and also promoted valuing cultural diversity in schools (Queensland Government, Department of Education and the Arts, 2005-2006). Furthermore, the Queensland Department of Education, Training and the Arts produced a 60-page Flying Start Induction Toolkit, which was given to permanent and temporary beginning teachers. This toolkit was supported by online tools and resources (Hudson et. al, 2009).

Researchers have argued for better and more consistent teacher orientation programs for overseas trained teachers. The recommendations include:

- The difference between overseas trained teachers and Australian beginner teachers must be taken into consideration while building a program of initial support and integration for immigrant teachers during their first few years of work (Michael, 2006; Biggs, 2010).
- Teacher orientation must include substantial information on community and extend a provision for assistance in banking, licensing, accommodation and transportation should it be required (Hutchison, 2005).
- A teacher orientation tour of the school showing the classrooms, technology and videos on best practices of experienced teachers (who might also act as mentors), might have the potential to provide the required guidance for overseas trained teachers. Furthermore, the role of a mentor should be that of a friend in order to assist overseas trained teachers through their transitional phase (Hutchison, 2005).
- The orientation process should introduce the new teachers to school staff and other networking agencies (Hutchison, 2005).

These recommendations, if successfully implemented, would be of immense support to overseas trained teachers in the initial years of settlement.

## **2.4 Summary**

The review of literature on the contextual experiences of overseas trained teachers prior to obtaining a teaching position in a public school discussed four issues that might become apparent. First, there was a general lack of background information on post immigration life in a foreign country. Secondly, teacher registration process might include different forms of English language testing, which could prove to be quite stressful and time consuming. Moreover, in Australia, each state had its own registration policies, as a result of which, employment of overseas trained teachers could be delayed. Thirdly, overseas trained teachers often had to take up remote or country positions to start their teaching careers in a foreign land, which could add to their stress and culture shock. Lastly, there was a lack of

consistency in the orientation programs for overseas trained teachers in Australia. Among many other recommendations, researchers (Bella, 1999; Hutchison, 2005) had suggested development of information kits; provision of advanced English coaching; promotional incentives and better and more practical teacher orientation programs as ways of addressing these four issues. The review of literature on the contextual experiences of overseas trained teachers before obtaining a teaching position in a public school led to the first research question:

- What are the contextual experiences faced by overseas trained teachers prior to obtaining a teaching position in a public secondary school of Western Australia and South Australia?

**2.5 Contextual experiences of overseas trained teachers after obtaining a teaching position in a public school**

The review of literature on the experiences of overseas trained teachers after obtaining a teaching position in a public school dealt with a discussion of different experiences that overseas trained teachers might have to confront after obtaining a teaching position in a public school. There were nine categories in this section that outlined a range of experiences that overseas trained teachers might need to deal with, both nationally and internationally. Along with many challenging experiences, the literature also recorded multiple positive and rewarding experiences of overseas trained teachers in foreign classrooms. Table 2.3 outlines the nine experiences in this section:

Table 2.3

*Experiences of overseas trained teachers after obtaining a teaching position in a public school*

2.5.1 Pedagogical dissonance and disparity in teaching methods
2.5.2 Language and communication
2.5.3 Curriculum

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#### **2.5.4 Mentoring**

#### **2.5.5 Behaviour management**

#### **2.5.6 Racism, xenophobia and cultural ignorance in school communities**

#### **2.5.7 Stress due to declining morale**

#### **2.5.8 Indicators of discrimination**

#### **2.5.9 Positive experiences and outcomes**

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##### *2.5.1 Pedagogical dissonance and disparity in teaching methods*

Teachers coming from foreign countries had to adjust to diverse pedagogical practices when they start teaching in Australian public schools. Kato (2001) observed that overseas trained teachers carried with them their own baggage of "culture of learning" (p. 30). A "Culture of learning" (Kato, 2001) was determined by a teacher's subjective conception of what might constitute a classroom atmosphere of good learning. These subjective conceptions evolved from the teachers' understanding of their own accustomed pedagogical practices. The "culture of learning" of overseas trained teachers could often collide with the "classroom culture" (Kato, 2001, p. 30) of students from another country. "Classroom culture," was defined as the general classroom expectation in a given context (Kato, 2001). Many overseas trained teachers succumbed to a form of culture shock due to a collision between "culture of learning" and "classroom culture" (Kato, 2001). While conducting research on the experiences of overseas trained teachers, Elbaz-Luwisch (2004) observed that personal beliefs, perspectives, values and outlook of the overseas trained teachers could have subjective influence on their adaptation process to a different pedagogy.

In Queensland, Bella (1999) found a number of pedagogical issues with which overseas trained teachers might find discordance. First, teachers had to design Individual Learning Plans (ILPs) for students who had different individual requirements, but were still put in general classes. This situation made the teachers multitask in the same classroom with children with different requirements and

capabilities. Secondly, overseas trained teachers further observed that Queensland classrooms were seen to be more oriented towards practical life skills rather than just theoretical learning. Many overseas teachers, especially those from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse and Non-English speaking background found this approach quite different from the teacher-centred, examination-oriented pedagogical approach that was practised in many other countries. Thirdly, overseas trained teachers observed that students often chose to waste valuable resources, which were barely available to students in other countries. For this reason, much more vigilance in the form of watchful monitoring of student behaviour was expected of teachers in Queensland, in comparison to overseas. Fourthly, overseas trained teachers considered freedom in lesson planning both as a privilege and a barrier, as there was little or no cooperation or lesson sharing amongst teachers. Finally, overseas trained teachers found a distinct difference between the student promotion system in Queensland compared to that of other countries. All students in Queensland were allowed to move forward to the next year grade irrespective of their capabilities, whereas in many countries they were held back if they did not qualify for the next grade through exams. This situation could have both positive and negative implications on student learning. These differences could make the adjustment of overseas trained teachers in the Australian education system quite challenging (Bella, 1999).

'The Globalisation and Teacher movement' report (Reid, Collins & Singh, 2010) raised specific recommendations to help overseas trained teachers. In this report, it was observed that Australian educators quite often try to convert overseas teachers' pedagogical beliefs and practices with prevalent notions of Australian pedagogy. The report advised the school communities against such practices and had specified that specialised mentoring in the way of knowledge sharing, rather than knowledge replacement would assist overseas trained teachers. Preparation for pedagogical diversity in advance was deemed to be a helpful option for preparing overseas trained teachers for their future professional journeys (Reid, Collins & Singh, 2010). Evans and Northcott (1999) suggested that distance education might be looked at, as a viable means of providing bridging courses for overseas professionals migrating to Australia. By offering such courses, the Government

could be catering to the needs of migrants whose locations, schedules and circumstances were quite diverse. These distance education courses might prepare the migrants, especially the overseas trained teachers, to cope better after their immigration.

### *2.5.2 Language and Communication*

Fluency in the language of instruction is a prerequisite for successful teaching careers. For example, Hutchison (2005) noted that some overseas trained teachers lacked oral fluency in English and this deficiency could cause a major issue in Australian classrooms. De Soyza, West and Jones (n.d) observed that in Western Australia, "classroom management is closely linked by principals to language skills and accents and appears to be used as the measure of ability and relative value of overseas gained qualifications and experience" (p. 23). De Soyza, West and Jones (n.d) also recorded that some principals had acknowledged that they were reluctant to "risk" employing overseas trained teachers due to their own previous "negative experiences" (p. 23). A number of immigrant teachers from Africa and India also reported negative student responses to their accent, as did teachers with American and Irish accents (Collins & Reid, 2012).

Hutchison and Jazzar (2007) found that in the United States, communication was the most common issue for immigrant teachers. These researchers asserted that most overseas trained teachers were aware of the fact that differences in their use of expressions, manners of speech, accents, spelling, use of slang expressions and body language might cause issues of disparity in their workplaces. These authors also observed that depending on the individual cultures, different meanings were assigned to different gestures, which could even make a simple communication very stressful for those individuals who were not well-conversant with it. Abramova (2013) observed that some Russian teachers in the United States had to take up positions as Education Assistants after failing to obtain teaching positions due to their foreign names and accents. One of these teachers had to give up her ambition to become a teacher-leader due to her lack of confidence in communicating with the wider school

community in fluent English. She felt that her incapacity to express her knowledge and expertise in clear words was affecting her credibility as a teacher. Abramova (2013) also observed that another overseas teacher realised that she often misinterpreted the cultural meanings of the language used by her students. The same overseas teacher also thought that classroom problems were created, as her tone of voice and intonation was different from that of local teachers. The difference in her verbal approach also impeded her understanding of messages in a foreign language. She did not understand humour in English and all these situations undermined her position as an expert teacher.

Niyubahwe et. al (2013) observed that many Russian teachers left their profession in Israel due to their lack of knowledge of Hebrew. Similar examples could be found in Ontario, where overseas teachers had to quit their profession, due to their lack of French skills (Schmidt et.al, 2010). Schmidt et.al (2010) suggested that in order to provide overseas trained teachers with reasonable foundation to succeed, additional community support must be provided. This effort would help these teachers to adapt to their new cultural and linguistic environment. Kato (2001) held the opinion that it was unjust and unfair to put overseas trained teachers directly into the classrooms without any proper training or in-service course. The expectation for these 'outsiders' to fit in a system with bare minimum strategies and preparation was quite impractical. Kato (2001) suggested that practical measures must be taken to address this issue.

Hutchison and Jazzar (2007) found that mentoring might be helpful for improving the language and communication skills of overseas trained teachers. These authors claimed that classroom observation and guided mentoring programs might help in easing difficulties arising due to disparities in language and accents of overseas trained teachers. Mentors' use of gestures and body language with the students as well as peers could serve as a model for most foreseeable situations for the new teachers. The authors also went on to argue that successful communication was a critical area for mentoring and mentor teachers should be knowledgeable of

both verbal and non-verbal communication. Ideally, experienced mentors should be able to pass the required skills on to the overseas trained teachers.

### *2.5.3 The Curriculum*

Each country has its own curriculum requirements and overseas trained teachers often found Australian curriculum different from their own (Bella 1999). There were no set textbooks in Queensland schools and teachers had the flexibility to create their own resources. Bella (1999) commented that most overseas trained teachers in Queensland felt that the flexibility of curriculum had its own challenges. For example, while a variety of resources were permitted and often used by teachers, sometimes it was difficult to obtain resources. Some overseas trained teachers found this approach difficult, as they were accustomed to a different kind of pedagogy. Bella (1999) also noted that a large number of overseas trained teachers felt that the expected level of work in Queensland classes was lower than a comparable year level in their home country. For example, grade expectations in Queensland schools were not similar to those in Canada. The standard of achievement was much lower in Queensland than in the United States, the former USSR and France.

De Soyza, West and Jones (n.d) noted that principals in Western Australia believed that overseas trained teachers must have knowledge of the curriculum in order to be successful. Parents were quick to complain about overseas trained teachers if they felt that the learning needs of their children had not been adequately met. In some cases, overseas trained teachers' ignorance of curriculum often promoted a sensitive and negative attitude towards teachers from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse backgrounds in the school community. This negative attitude in turn evolved into a self-perpetuating cycle, whereby schools became reluctant to employ overseas trained teachers (De Soyza, West & Jones, n.d).



#### *2.5.4 Mentoring*

Effective mentoring could significantly improve international teachers' cultural adaptation to public schools (Hutchison and Jazzar, 2007). In a study of worldwide immigrants in transition, Ward et. al (2001) observed that in most cases, the sojourners or immigrants faced difficulties because they were "left to swim or sink on their own" (p. 16). The authors suggested immigrants coming from different cultural backgrounds would get enormous support if they were provided with some systematic help and training with strategies for coping with culture-contact induced stress. This observation on effective and timely mentoring might also be true for overseas trained teachers trying to cope amidst multiple challenging situations in a public school. Bella (1999) suggested that Universities and other providers of professional development activities for overseas trained teachers might think of making provision in their courses in the areas of: classroom management, teaching methods, knowledge of cultural factors and curriculum. While working with immigrant teachers in South Africa, Vandeyar et. al (2014) recommended that mentoring programs should focus more on pedagogy and educational landscape and less on content knowledge in order to be successful and effective. If effectively implemented, these recommendations might be of assistance for the mentoring process of overseas trained teachers.

Peeler and Jane (2005) suggested that mentoring during a teacher orientation period could facilitate an overseas trained teacher's introduction to the school culture and community and help to bridge the gap in cultural understanding of different educational systems and expectations. Workplace tensions experienced by new overseas trained teachers could be devastating and had the capacity to alienate them from their school communities and even from the teaching profession itself. New information on staff proficiency, expectation and culture could be 'picked up' through exposure and affiliations when newcomers developed relationships with other senior members of staff to gain an 'insider' (being accepted as one of their own) status. Peeler and Jane (2005) observed that unfortunately, many experienced staff members maintained their distance and did not come forward to assist new teachers, both local and overseas trained. In this regard, Peeler and Jane (2005) urged

that mentors who made this investment of time and energy in mentoring new teachers, both local and overseas trained, also benefitted professionally and personally, as they honed their own communication, organisation and interpersonal skills in the process. Furthermore, Peeler and Jane (2005) noted that through the mentoring process, the mentors could gain personal satisfaction, confidence, and self-esteem. A mentoring program, thus, could prove beneficial to both the mentor and the mentee.

It must be noted, however, that unsuitable mentors could affect a teacher's professional effectiveness and confidence in the long term. Martinovic and Diamini (2009) observed that an overseas teacher candidate suffered immensely in her conflict laden relationship with a Canadian associate teacher, who also served as her mentor. Even though this overseas teacher followed every word of instruction that her mentor teacher gave to her, yet she failed to receive her acceptance and appreciation. This Canadian mentor never missed any occasion to belittle the efforts of the overseas student teacher. Later, when the mentor teacher realised that the particular overseas student teacher had been teaching for seven years before migrating to Canada, her attitude changed and everything became acceptable from that time onwards. This incident illustrated that mentor programs could only be effective if the mentored remained under the supervision of a just and professional mentor. Abramova (2013) argued that "colleagues should consider immigrant teachers' need for moral support and mentoring in understanding a culture that is alien to them" (p. 156). Equity in a multicultural society could exist only if immigrant teachers felt that their experience and knowledge were respected (Abramova, 2013).

#### *2.5.5 Student Behaviour Management Issues*

Student behaviour management issues could be an immense threat to the survival of overseas trained teachers in the public schools of Australia. De Soyza, West and Jones (n.d) recorded that in Western Australia, even though the school authorities took prompt action on any reported racial harassment or abuse case on the

student level, they failed to take action if the bullying was targeted against a teacher. This situation was common to both overseas and locally trained teachers. The authors observed that in the case of overseas trained teachers, the school authorities often took a very casual approach in this respect with responses like "students will be students," (p. 10) or, that they do the same with "locally-trained teachers" (p. 10). Back in 1998, a study by Kamler et. al recorded the extreme behaviour patterns of some students in public schools, especially those in rural and remote areas of Australia. Kamler et. al (1998) suggested that overseas trained teachers faced the brunt of student misbehaviour, more than their Australian counterparts. The authors illustrated the psychological impact of student behaviour issues on overseas trained teachers through the stories of some teachers. For example, using a story of a Japanese teacher in a rural school, these researchers positioned the audience to understand issues of racism, intolerance and lack of respect that were prevalent among some students in public schools. At the same time the narration showed the incapacity, inadequacy and helplessness of the public school authorities to address those extreme issues in general. In addition, the stories also showed that the school authorities lacked the power or intention to develop strategies to help the struggling teachers, especially those from overseas. Kamler et.al (1998) also pointed out that those teachers who failed to earn respect very quickly gained a poor reputation. Recent articles (Bad Apple Bullies. Working conditions for Australian teachers, n.d; National–New Zealand Herald, 12 July, 2015) showed that over the years since the observation was made by Kamler et.al (1998), not much has changed as far as abusive student behaviour was concerned. Teachers as well as school administration face the brunt of student misbehaviour on a regular basis (Bad Apple Bullies. Working conditions for Australian teachers, n.d).

Internationally, overseas trained teachers have also reported negative experiences in managing student behaviour. Maylor et.al (2006) observed that in the United Kingdom overseas trained teachers believed that the single most difficult barrier to their adjustment process to English public schools was the issue of uncontrolled student behaviour. Overseas trained teachers found that students were rude, disrespectful and often outrageous in their repeated threatening behaviour towards the teachers. Some teachers complained that they were sworn at, verbally

abused and even spat at by the students. Many overseas trained teachers complained that general behaviour management rules were not clearly explained to them and many classroom management strategies that were useful in their own home countries were deemed unacceptable in England (Maylor et. al, 2006). Maylor et.al (2006) also observed that overseas trained teachers felt that they did not have any power or authority over the students and that the students could simply get away with their misconduct. Some overseas trained teachers claimed that this very issue of uncontrolled student behaviour had a direct effect on the students' academic outcome (Maylor et. al, 2006).

Vandeyar et.al (2014) reported that Zimbabwean teachers in South African schools believed that students were disrespectful to all their teachers, including the local professionals. These Zimbabwean teachers found student behaviour in South Africa quite unacceptable and demanded a toll on their class time. These teachers described the students in South Africa as lazy, disrespectful and ill-disciplined compared to those in Zimbabwe. South African students indulged in activities which these immigrant teachers could not condone, as they did not have such classroom scenarios in their own native country. Back in 1998, Terry reported that a significant proportion of teachers in the United Kingdom were bullied by their students on a regular basis. In New Zealand there were reports of student misbehaviour from all areas and their misconducts were targeted to all teachers in general, irrespective of their backgrounds (National-New Zealand Herald 12 July, 2015). The same article also reported that New Zealand authorities were establishing a special task force to control the extreme behaviour issues of the students. Finally, Niyubahwe et. al (2013) noted that in countries, where education was not considered as a human right for all, teachers received high esteem and were viewed as influential persons who could have a significant effect on a child's future. On the other hand in first world countries like the United States, where education was considered to be an undeniable right for all citizens, a teacher enjoyed no such esteemed status.

### *2.5.6 Racism, xenophobia and cultural ignorance in school communities*

There is a predominant lack of acceptance of overseas trained teachers by the school community in Australia. There was evidence in the literature, that even student teachers from overseas background faced racial discrimination in Australia. As far back as 1997, Santoro discussed some of the experiences of student teachers from overseas backgrounds in the Australian context. Santoro (1997) observed that certain mentor teachers often sided with the students, against the apparent shortcomings of the student teachers from overseas background. These perspectives of the mentors made those future teachers feel even more vulnerable in their struggle to establish identity. For example, while overseeing the lessons of a Chinese born student teacher, her supervisor assumed that the student teacher's stereotypical Asian politeness could be seen as a sign of weakness in a classroom. In contrast, the mentor regarded her own assertiveness as a useful tool to manage student behaviour and attitude in classrooms. Through an analysis of the same supervisor's remarks, Santoro (1997) came to the understanding that overseas teachers, especially those who were non-Europeans, were attributed less professional respect and status and were often regarded as inadequate or inferior. These teachers were often generalised in a racist manner and referred to in terms of "they've all got their own problems" (p. 96). The 'problems' that were referred to, ranged from classroom management to lack of subject knowledge, or that of Australian culture and language. In addition, there was an immense lack of action and casual approach taken by the school authorities to prevent student misbehaviour against teachers in public secondary schools, especially those from overseas. De Soyza, West and Jones (n.d) suggested that by adopting this sort of attitude and allowing such behaviour to be ongoing, schools were in fact accommodating anti-social behaviour, including racism. The researchers suggested that anti-social and prejudiced behaviour towards all members of the school community should be clearly defined, reviewed and publicised as unacceptable.

More recent articles showed that little has changed since the observations made by Santoro (1997). Cole and Stuart (2005) reported incidents of racism, xenophobia and cultural ignorance amongst pupils and other teachers when dealing with overseas

trained teachers in the English schools. The authors observed that in South-East England, many overseas trained student teachers reported hearing remarks like "we hate all foreigners" (p. 357) or "go back to your own country" (p. 357) directed towards them. In one instance, a Sri Lankan teacher was asked if he rode elephants in his country, or if there were even any existence of cars in his country. The authors observed that misinformation also led some pupils to make ill-natured jokes on drug smuggling in reference to some of their African teachers. Another student asked a Polish teacher if polar bears came from Poland. In some other instances, teachers reported that their colleagues avoided them even if they shared the same office (Cole & Stuart, 2005). The above incidents illustrated that overseas trained teachers often faced racist discrimination not only from the students, but also from the wider school community. Cole and Stuart (2005) considered this kind of racist behaviour and attitude of the school community as deeply disturbing.

Overseas trained teachers were often affected by prejudiced and preconceived perceptions of the school community. These preconceptions gave rise to stereotypical assumptions. Subedi (2008) gave an explanation of the root cause of racism, which could be applicable to the experiences of racial bias against overseas trained teachers in foreign classrooms. Subedi (2008) argued that the

Dominant interpretation of authentic identity is based on the view that "the 'real' identity of an ethnic or racial group exists and can be easily defined or categorised. Consequently the mainstream perception that individuals need to act in pre-conceived ways of being brown, black, red or yellow suggests that there is a set of performances associated with being a racial/ethnic subject. For this reason, within the dominant discourse, when people do not express behaviors or characteristics that are associated with an ethnic group, they are often stereotypically constructed as not being (or acting) as he presumed 'authentic' ethnic being. Consequently, subjects who do not fit as the assigned markers of being a normative ethnic subject in schools are racialized as being deviant subversive and a threat to the white racial establishment (p. 61).

In reference to the above mentioned observation, Subedi (2008) noted that in the United States, an overseas trained teacher complained that due to her ethnic origin, she was considered to be a less authentic teacher by her students in comparison to her local counterparts. She claimed that her cultural identity, along with her linguistic style influenced the circumstances, which led her to be represented as a

less legitimate educator. She commanded less authority and recognition at her school. The same overseas teacher also thought that her lack of authority was connected to her being an English as a Second Language (ESL) teacher. She noted that ESL occupied the lowest intellectual value in the hierarchy of academic disciplines in her school. Since most of the ESL students struggle academically, this overseas teacher also thought that most ESL teachers were often constructed as being incapable of making any tangible impact on the school community (Subedi, 2008). Such outlooks could make the adaptation of overseas trained teachers to foreign schools immensely difficult and stressful.

#### *2.5.7 Stress due to declining morale*

The implementation of modern technologies, including social media could often cause distress and lower the morale of all the teachers, including those from overseas. According to an article (The Educator, 16 April, 2015) in the United States, implementation of many policies and technologies that were meant to improve teaching standards, actually led to a decline in teacher morale. The implementation of 'hi-tech' technologies and new policies had resulted in a large number of teachers leaving their profession altogether before the completion of their fifth year in service. The same situation could also be found in Australia, as many teachers were found leaving their professions, for the same reasons as that of their United States counterparts-unmanageable workloads and unsupportive staffrooms (The Educator, 16 April, 2015). High stress and low morale of teachers, both local and overseas trained, could worsen the situation.

Teacher morale was often adversely affected by unethical online behaviour of students and parents. Some teachers, both local and overseas trained, became victims of online abuse. Sexist, racist and homophobic remarks, along with offensive personal comments were used against school staff in the social media. For example, in an article posted on BBC (2015) entitled 'Teachers facing more abuse on social media', it was observed that around 60% of the 1,500 teachers questioned in a poll said that they faced social media abuse, compared to 21% in 2014. Nearly 48% of

these reported remarks were posted by pupils; 40% by parents and 12% by both parents and pupils. 34% of the staff said that their photos or videos were taken without their consent. 33% of the poll participants received remarks on their performance as a teacher, 9% faced allegations from pupils about inappropriate behaviour and 8% had been subjected to threatening behaviour (Teachers 'facing more abuse on social media', BBC, 2 April, 2015). Overseas trained teachers, while trying to cope in a new environment, could find themselves particularly vulnerable to this issue.

Unmanageable workload and unsupportive environment could lead to declining morale of teachers, which might then result in their resignation or early retirement. This situation could be applicable to all teachers, both local and overseas trained. In a Monash University study titled 'Monash Uni says teachers quitting in "epidemic proportions," (training.com.au.18, April, 2015), it was found that teachers were quitting en masse. It would appear that within the next 10 years (i.e by 2025), up to 125,000 teaching positions would need to be filled by graduates, as up to half of the currently (2015) employed teachers would have reached their retirement age. These statistics were also confirmed by another observation made by the Australian Council of Educational Research (ACER, 30 April, 2014). There was a prediction of teacher shortage in Australia by 2025, due to early resignation of teachers, unmanageable stress and retirement of teachers (training.com.au.18, April, 2015).

The Australian Council of Educational Research (ACER 30 April, 2014) found that the number of teachers aged over 50 had increased, while the number under 30 had decreased in recent years and as mentioned above, it indicated that a teacher shortage by 2025 would be imminent. For this reason, Reid (2014) observed that in the future, the nation would need to be more reliant on overseas trained professionals, to fill in the gap, than at present times. In an article titled 'The Answer to Teacher shortage', Professor Reid of University of Western Sydney wrote "Many overseas-trained teachers are encouraged to move to Australia and to do so in the belief that our country is in desperate need of teachers and that their skills will be in



high demand" (Reid, ACER, 2014). It is highly probable that more overseas trained teachers might join the Australian workforce in the near future.

#### *2.5.8 Indicators of Discrimination*

Overseas trained teachers were often discriminated against in various areas of their professional careers on the basis of dress, ethnic origin, accent, names and identity. As was discussed earlier, Santoro (1997) conducted a case study on the experiences of two Chinese-born and educated postgraduate students on a three-week practicum in separate Melbourne secondary schools. Along with the observations already discussed in this review of literature before, this study also raised concerns about the possible existence of racist discourse within schools and its implications on teacher education. In this study, Santoro (1997) noted that during the interview, one of the student teachers tried to downplay her cultural and ethnic difference. The other student teacher felt that his success in the workplace depended on his minimising the cultural difference between himself, his students and his colleagues. These student teachers did not feel that their contribution was valued, apart from their existence being looked at with curious inquisitiveness.

Overseas trained teachers found it hard to be accepted by the school community, if they taught any subject other than their native languages. In this reference, Kato (2001) observed that overseas trained teachers were widely expected to teach and fit into the role of a 'Languages Other than English' (LOTE) teacher. Kato (2001) conducted a research on three first-year teachers and ten trainees in Australia, all of whom were Japanese native speakers. This research showed that the professional integrity of overseas trained teachers was challenged if they taught any other subject other than their own native languages. In this respect, Kato noticed that LOTE was considered to be less important than other mainstream subjects. This kind of discriminative and biased attitude of school communities impeded the acceptance of overseas trained teachers in the Australian public schools.

De Soyza, West and Jones (n.d) noted that there were observable incidents in public schools of Western Australia, which showed the effects and consequences of discrimination on overseas trained teachers. For example, due to unhelpful and rude comments and behaviour of some of the school staff, a very highly qualified Indonesian teacher in Western Australia, left his teaching position and took up a cleaning job instead. In another instance, life was made miserable for a very experienced overseas teacher who went to a country school in Western Australia to seek relief teaching. Students hid her belongings and members of staff did not share resources with her. This overseas teacher felt that her experiences during relief teaching had not enabled her to demonstrate her true teaching potential. De Soyza, West and Jones (n.d) also noted that in another instance, a primary teacher in Western Australia introduced a new overseas trained Art and music teacher to his class with "By the way she wears long frocks and talks funny"(p. 15). A Bosnian refugee, who was later granted an Australian citizenship, was greeted by a colleague saying "I don't know how people like you get jobs when there are plenty of Aussies unemployed" (p. 15). A Mathematics teacher from Germany persistently got salutes from her Year 10 students and was greeted with "Heil Hitler!"(p. 15). The students also drew swastikas on the covers of their Maths folders (De, Soyza, West & Jones n.d).

Comparable observations were made by Block (2012) on the experiences of overseas teachers in Canada, where they were referred to as Internationally Educated Teachers (IETs). Block (2012) observed that just like other immigrants, these overseas teachers (IETs) were also positioned through socially constructed categories. These categories placed them as outsiders, foreigners, strangers or the Other in society. For example, Schmidt et. al (2010) observed that at a Winnipeg school, an Indian overseas trained teacher was advised against wearing her ethnic clothes, as those clothes were not deemed to be appropriate. Schmidt et.al (2010) also noted that a Polish immigrant teacher was publicly humiliated by the school principal, for her accent. The principal publicly reprimanded the teacher and informed her that she would not be able to resume her teaching career if she did not improve her English speaking skills. In that context, Schmidt et.al (2010) noted that the school where this incident happened was supposedly supportive of language

diversity and the principal who made the comment was also an immigrant and an additional language speaker of English. Schmidt et. al (2010) observed that the principal's criticism demonstrated that teachers with heritage language accents were treated with open hostility, thus devaluing multilingualism and equity-oriented policies. The policies on multilingualism and equity had little or no impact on the discriminatory practices in some schools (Schmidt et.al 2010).

Block (2012) observed that there was bias and discrimination in the hiring process of overseas trained teachers in Manitoba, Canada. This discrimination was due to the fact that the dominant culture in Western societies represents a "teacher" as white, Christian, young, middle-class, heterosexual and able-bodied. Similar observations were made by Inglis and Philps, back in 1995. These authors observed that in Australia, overseas trained teachers from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds found it hard to fit in the image of a "good teacher" (Inglis and Philps, 1995, p.xi). They noted that the acceptable persona of a "good teacher," (p.xi) in an Australian context was quite clearly that of a native English speaker. This concept proved to be true in the wider Australian community as well. For example, in the 1990s, many overseas trained teachers from non-English speaking backgrounds were living in Australia, but failed to find teaching positions. The expertise and advice of those teachers could have been used for other purposes like framing policies on multicultural issues, activities and curriculum, but they were not (Han & Singh, 2007). It appeared that the authorities did not seem to think that it was necessary or worthwhile to tap into those readily available resources, thus reconfirming the social image of a "good teacher" (Inglis & Philps, 1995. p.xi).

Observations on discrimination against overseas trained teachers were also made by De Soyza, West and Jones (n.d) in Western Australia. These authors observed that in Western Australia, data-based selections of teaching candidates were sometimes manipulated in favour of teachers with 'non-foreign' sounding names. Culturally and Linguistically Diverse staff who seemed most likely to be employed and accepted by students and parents strongly reflected an Anglo Celtic 'norm' in terms of language, accent, dress and overall culture (De Soyza, West &

Jones, n.d). In this context, Block (2012) observed that out of desperation, some immigrant teachers in Canada were even ready to change their names, just to get through to an interview. It might be worth noting in this respect, that in the United Kingdom, Prime Minister David Cameron has announced to start 'name-blind' application system from 2017 to prevent the racial bias in the hiring process of employees (The Guardian, 26 October, 2015). This kind of action might ease the plight of overseas teachers as quite often they "become victims of an exclusion mechanism, which restricted their access to positions of responsibility and limited their influence in school decision making" (p. 287, Michael 2005 cited in Niyubahwe 2013).

Niyubahwe (2013) noted evidences of marginalisation of overseas teachers in their work opportunities in Israel. Niyubahwe (2013) observed that often immigrant teachers held positions of inferior status to their white colleagues. Vandeyar et.al (2014) argued that "societal and institutional structures labelled and projected immigrant teachers as outsiders operating outside the mainstream" (p.15). For example, the authors (Vandeyar et.al, 2014) observed that in South Africa, discrimination was shown against migrant teachers in the form of non-issuance of a South African identity document. The migrant African teachers found it hard to get a teaching position, as South African nationals got priority. The migrant teachers also found it difficult to obtain a car loan, house bonds, without an identity document, forcing many of them to return back to their native countries. These teachers perceived this policy as an act of institutionalised discrimination by the government of South Africa. Vandeyar et. al (2014) also observed that lack of access to become active participants of communities of practice constituted impediments to the successful reconstruction of professional identities of immigrant overseas teachers in foreign lands.

#### *2.5.9 Positive experiences and outcomes*

In spite of multiple negative experiences, many overseas trained teachers have observed that the Australian education system has provided them with many

opportunities for professional and personal growth (Reid, Collins & Singh, 2007). Reid, Collins and Singh (2007) noted that the majority of immigrant teachers were satisfied professionally and personally about their experiences as immigrant teachers in Australian public schools. A majority of immigrant teachers across all states suggested that they would recommend Australia as a teaching destination. This observation was a strong endorsement of the Australian immigrant teacher program (Reid, Collins & Singh, 2007). Another positive finding by these authors was that a majority of immigrant teachers in all states planned to continue in their profession in Australia. However, the authors (Reid, Collins & Singh, 2007) also observed, that nationally, a minority of overseas trained teachers remained dissatisfied.

According to Lee (1966) as quoted in Miller (2008), in the United Kingdom, despite different challenges, many overseas trained teachers articulated their positive professional experiences. Some of those positive experiences included greater awareness of learning difficulties, engagement in planning for inclusion and also an increase in subject knowledge and skills. Other positive experiences included improvements in professional practice and greater access to continuing professional development. Some other positive experiences that were mentioned included localised and other forms of professional knowledge and acculturation. For the majority of the overseas trained teachers, the result of such a process has resulted in the development of a newly formed professional identity. Elbaz-Luwisch (2004) recorded constructive, positive experiences of overseas trained teachers. He agreed that whenever the overseas teachers have tried to create meaningful relationships with students and staff, it assisted them to adapt to the environment and make place for themselves in the system.

Not all students were biased against overseas trained teachers. Irrespective of their backgrounds, some students recognised and respected hard work, professionalism and engagement in student welfare in their teachers. For example, Vandeyar et.al (2014) observed that some students in South African schools thought very highly about their immigrant teachers. The students thought that these teachers were punctual, systematic, regular in their feedback and not hesitant to repeat lessons

for better understanding, if required. Braine and Ling (2007) pointed out that it was without doubt that some students in a few Asian countries had a special affinity towards Native English Speaking Teachers. But at the same time, these authors also observed that for some other language (ESL) students, the criterion of importance was the quality of teaching and not the origin and background of their teachers. Students interviewed in Hong Kong by Braine and Ling (2007) pointed out that they did not mind whether their English as a Second Language teacher hailed from a native English speaking or non-English speaking background. Those students in Hong Kong valued education and for them, English was important for the advancement of their career. Any teacher who could do the job fairly and competently, was accepted, respected and regarded with high esteem by those students.

## **2.6 Summary**

The review of literature on the contextual experiences of overseas trained teachers after obtaining a teaching position in a public school discussed eight challenging issues and various positive experiences and outcomes as observed by these teachers. The eight challenging issues that were discussed in the section included: pedagogical dissonance and disparity in teaching methods, difficulties in language and communication, differences in standards and curriculum, lack of consistency in mentoring for new teachers, student behaviour management, racism, xenophobia and misinformation in school communities, stress and declining morale in school staff and discrimination against overseas trained teachers. The review of this section of literature concluded with a reflection on positive experiences and outcomes in the profession. Overseas trained teachers claimed that irrespective of multiple negative experiences, teaching in Australia and overseas, had provided them with a new beginning, offered them abundant exposure and also bestowed them with a new professional identity. The review of literature on the contextual experiences of overseas trained teachers after obtaining a teaching position in a public school led to the second research question:

- What are the contextual experiences faced by overseas trained teachers after obtaining a teaching position in a public secondary school of Western Australia and South Australia?

## **2.7 The effects of immigrants' cultural values on their adaptation process**

Hofstede (1984) described 'culture' as a 'collective programming' of minds that distinguishes members of one group or category of people from another. There is a lack of existing literature on the effects of cultural values on the adaptation process of overseas trained teachers, both in Australia and abroad. As immigrants, overseas trained teachers are subjected to similar adaptation issues befalling other immigrants in general. This section discusses the components of cultural attributes and delves into the ways in which cultural disparities in a new environment could affect the adaptation process of immigrants. The discussion has the potential to provide an insight into the effects of cultural values on the adaptation process of overseas trained teachers to the public schools of Australia. There are four categories in this section that indicate the effects of cultural attributes on immigrants. These categories are outlined in Table 2.4.

Table 2.4

*The effects of immigrants' cultural values on their adaptation process*

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### **2.7.1 Human behaviour and self- identity**

### **2.7.2 Effects of cultural attributes on immigrants' adaptability**

### **2.7.3 Effects of cultural dissonance on the adaptation process of overseas trained teachers as immigrants**

### **2.7.4 Resultant stress due to cultural expectations and workplace reality**

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### *2.7.1 Human behaviour and self-identity*

Migration is a complex process, which forces immigrants to make multiple life adjustments in varying ways. Bhugra (2004) described migration as a process of social change where an individual, either alone, or in accompaniment of others, leaves one geographical area, for prolonged stay or settlement in another geographical area. Bhugra (2004) also observed that some of the reasons for migration might be economic betterment, political upheaval in one's own native country or education. Culture plays a major role in the adaptation process of immigrants. Cultural traits are connected with specific values, perspectives and beliefs. Hofstede (1984) observed that cultural values and beliefs affected both an individual's personal and professional lives and aspirations. Values signify what is truly important to human beings. Values are very subjective and vary from person to person. Long-lasting beliefs give rise to values. A belief is an idea that seems true to a person. There are many variables that affect the belief system of a human being. Personal beliefs and values affect people's attitudes. Attitudes are mental dispositions that make people behave, or respond to a set of circumstances in a particular way. Human behaviour is a composition of all the three factors: beliefs, values and attitudes (Immigration Advisers Authority, New Zealand, 2015). Figure 2.2 illustrates the relationship between beliefs, values and attitudes, which in turn modify human behaviour.



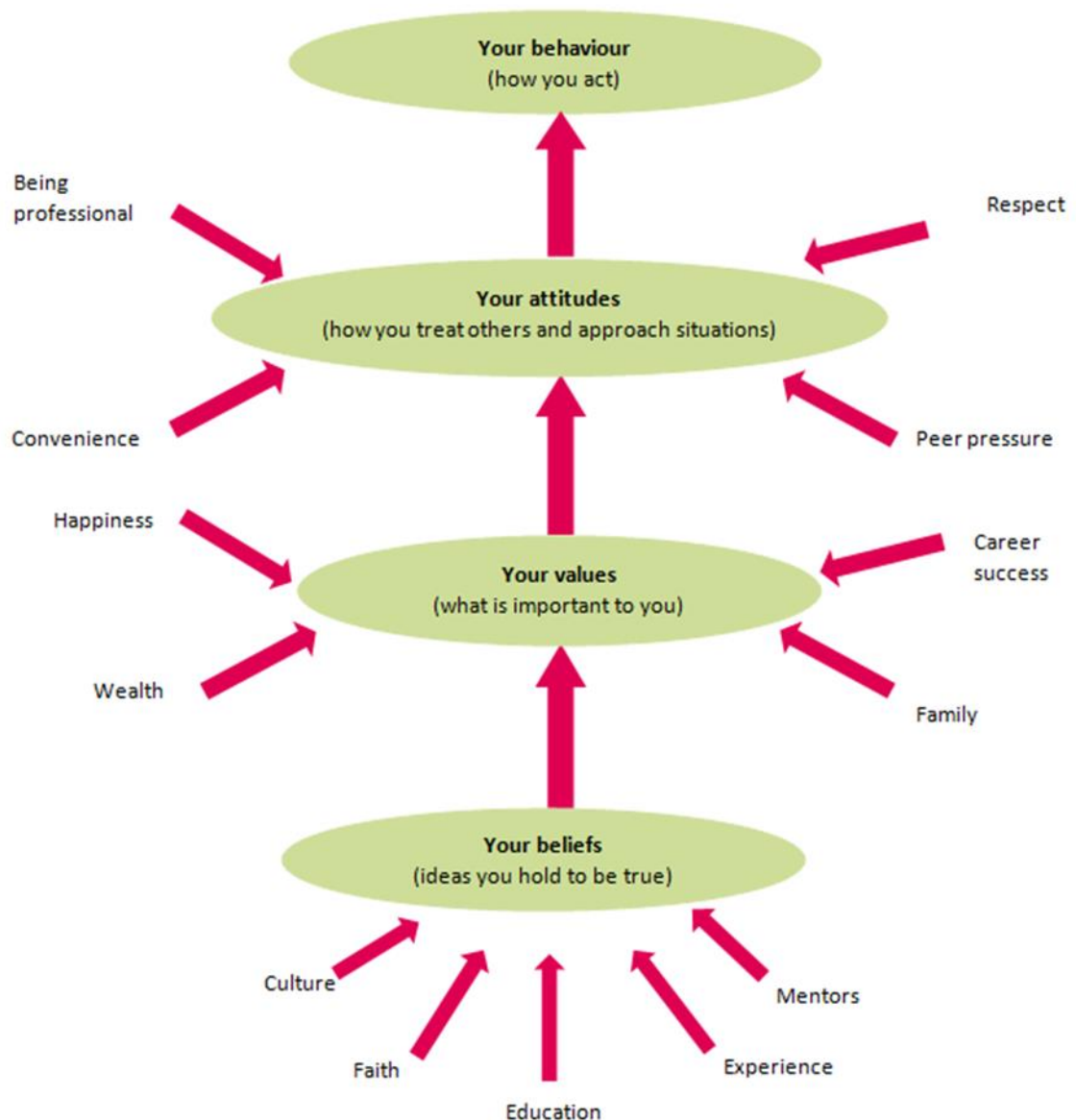


Figure 2.2 *Interrelationship between beliefs, values and attitudes affecting human behaviour.* [Source: Immigration Advisers Authority, New Zealand, 2015].

Cultural beliefs, values and perspectives create human behaviour and all these factors together form human identity. Vandeyar et. al (2014) argued that there was a profound connection between identity and social practice. Identity and practice could be a real life mirror of each other. Wenger (1998) cited in Vandeyar et. al (2014) described a person's identity as layers of participations and expressions by which our experience and its social interpretation informed each other. He also argued that our identity was not only equivalent to our self-image, or about what others in society

think about us, it was also about our experience of being in the world. The self-identities of overseas trained teachers that were shaped by their cultural beliefs, values and perspectives, might affect their professional practice in Australia.

### *2.7.2 Effects of cultural attributes on immigrants' adaptability*

There were many variables that affect the adaptability of immigrants in a foreign country. Ethnic background and origin had an influence in shaping human personalities. Burnett (1998) observed that there may be diversities even between members of the same ethnic group located in a different country. People belonging to any one ethnic group may come from different backgrounds, social class and regional locations, which could result in variation in approach, outlook, expectations and response. Amongst other variables, the main influences on an individual were those of: class, gender, education, wealth, occupation and regional influences. Burnett (1998) noted that attributes and stages of an immigrant's life cycle, such as age, family, marital status and reproductive status at the time of migration could also affect the settlement experience. Burnett (1998) observed that immigrants had to pass through certain adaptive cycles in order to fit into any foreign society, including Australia. Immigration might be a difficult and time consuming process, depending on multiple factors that could affect their lives during the time of migration. The sudden change of situation and circumstances might give rise to a sense of confusion and destabilisation in some immigrants (Burnett, 1998). All the above mentioned factors might affect overseas trained teachers and their settlement process, just like other immigrants.

Immigrants arrive in a foreign country with their own cultural values, which shape their perspectives towards life. The conception of 'habitus,' (Bourdieu, 1984) explained the importance of understanding a person's background and depicted the condition in which people continue to act, interpret or behave in a certain preconceived way, quite unknowingly long after changing their environment and situation. In this regard, there might be a possibility that overseas trained teachers still continue to behave and act in the same manner that they were used to, back in

their home countries. Overseas trained teachers might also be influenced by 'habitus' (Bourdieu, 1984) in their understanding of pedagogical practices. Particularly for overseas teachers, this tension might be created due to differences in pedagogical approaches and cultural disparities (Kato, 2001). This situation could create tension in overseas trained teachers' adaptation process to the Australian public schools.

### *2.7.3 Effects of cultural dissonance on the adaptation process of overseas trained teachers as immigrants*

Adaptation to a new country and culture might be a very lengthy and stressful process. Elbaz-Luwisch (2004) noticed that stories in literature about teaching in a new culture were rare as it went against the common expectation of a teacher being the representative of a culture. The teacher was also regarded as a harbinger of a given culture, responsible to pass on the traits of the civilisation to the next generation. Elbaz-Luwisch (2004) also observed that this expectation could prove to be a burden on overseas trained teachers, as very rarely were they given the time and opportunity to adjust into the community before they found themselves obliged to undertake their classroom responsibilities. Large-scale immigration and geographic mobility positioned immigrant teachers as part of a much wider phenomenon of globalisation and the teachers were expected to deploy their skills in any setting as independent, expert professionals, even if they themselves found it hard to identify with the culture being passed on (Elbaz-Luwisch, 2004).

As was mentioned earlier, just like other immigrants, overseas trained teachers pass through multiple challenges while adapting to a new culture, in which 'culture shock' (Kato, 2001) might be at the forefront. The Merriam-Webster Dictionary (2015) defined 'culture shock' as "a sense of confusion and uncertainty sometimes with feelings of anxiety that may affect people exposed to an alien culture or environment without adequate preparation." Disparities between the culture of birth and that of the adopted country might create a 'culture shock' (Kato, 2001) for immigrants. Overseas trained teachers, especially those from culturally and linguistically diverse and non-English speaking backgrounds, face a culture shock when they enter Australian classrooms for the first time. Miller (2008) documented

some examples of 'culture shock,' that were experienced by Caribbean teachers who migrated to the United Kingdom. These teachers experienced 'culture shock' due to the fact that many overseas teachers were used to unconditional respect by the students. These teachers experienced 'culture shock' due to differences between their classroom expectations and the actual reality of teaching in the United Kingdom. Miller (2008) observed that these teachers experienced amongst many other negative experiences, loss of confidence, a general lack of support, financial constraints and an inability to be accepted as equals by local colleagues. Miller (2008) recorded that some negative experiences of overseas trained teachers in Australia were not having their original qualifications accepted as Australian equivalent and suffering abuse (racial, verbal and physical) at the hands of pupils, leading to 'culture shock'. Miller (2008) noted that these experiences had multiple impacts on the overseas trained teachers' stress and made their adaptation process to a new country even more difficult.

#### *2.7.4 Resultant stress due to cultural expectations and workplace reality*

Unnatural expectations from the school authorities on overseas trained teachers to adjust to a foreign teaching environment of which they had little or no prior experience or knowledge of, could put added pressure on their adaptation process. Maylor et. al (2006) observed that in the United Kingdom, many overseas trained teachers experienced difficulty in adjusting to the British education system. This difficulty arose due to differences in curriculum, cultural expectations, teaching practices and most importantly, the teachers' confrontation with unmanageable student behaviour. The lack of discipline in the English classrooms and presumptions of accomplished teaching performance by the authorities, created immense stress on the overseas teachers' daily lives. Overseas trained teachers were expected to deal with these different cultural expectations and pedagogical requirements with little or no support. Maylor et.al (2006) observed that the overseas trained teachers who were interviewed for their research did not belong to a similar, homogeneous group, having differences in background, culture, race, ethnicity and age. However, irrespective of these differences, all these teachers reported the same classroom experiences. Hence, Maylor et. al (2006) concluded that the negative

experiences of overseas trained teachers in the United Kingdom was due to the differences in educational systems and cultural expectations. In their concluding remarks, these authors recommended that differences in teaching and learning approaches and behaviour expectations made the adaptation process of overseas trained teachers to the British education system difficult. Further, they suggested that more time should be provided to these teachers to assimilate into the system and adapt to a different educational environment.

Jhagroo (2004), as cited in Biggs (2010), argued that an empowering professional development program must be created to help overseas trained teachers balance and negotiate the values of the adopted country in relation to their own. Migrating teachers need to understand and adapt to the culture and norms of the country of their adoption. In this respect it would be necessary to take into consideration the observation made by Crozier and Kleinasser (2006) on the experiences of overseas trained teachers. These authors observed that most of the overseas trained teachers who took part in their research pointed out that it was very important to learn about the standard attitudes and behaviours of the adopted country. Acceptance and regard for the visual aspects of a country's culture like food and clothing were very important. Overseas trained teachers from different cultures pointed out that a positive frame of mind was needed to accept and adapt to a foreign language, culture and expectations (Crozier & Kleinasser, 2006).

A similar observation was made by Me'tais, back in 1992. Me'tais (1992) observed that all incoming teachers in the United Kingdom must be willing and able to participate fully and flexibly in the life of the school and the community. She also claimed that only in this way could new teachers hope to fully assimilate into their new workplaces. In this respect, Me'tais (1992) noted that along with that kind of positive undertaking from the incoming overseas trained teachers, the school and the community also needed to play their own roles in order to make the overseas trained teachers' adaptation process a success.

## **2.8 Summary**

The discussion on the effects of cultural values on immigrants indicated that subjective cultural attributes could affect an immigrant's adaptation process to a new environment and the same might also be true for overseas trained teachers.

Bourdieu's (1984) research shows that immigrants might continue to act and behave in a certain preconceived manner long after their immigration, due to their cultural attributes, which can again be dependent on multiple variables. A change of country and environment led many overseas trained teachers to experience 'culture shock' (Kato, 2001). Unrealistic pressure, unpreparedness and misconceptions led to many negative workplace experiences for overseas trained teachers and so these teachers may well need more time to adjust culturally to a changed teaching environment. Researchers like Crozier and Kleinasser, (2006), Jhagroo, (2004), Me'tais, (1992) believed that immigrants should make an attempt to understand, fully participate in the school community and respect the culture of their adopted country. Effects of culture on adaptation of overseas trained teachers to public schools (both primary and secondary) have been identified as an area requiring more research (Kato, 2001; Sharplin, 2009). The review of literature in this section led to the third research question of this study:

- How do overseas trained teachers' cultural values and perspectives affect their adjustment processes to the public secondary schools of Western Australia and South Australia?

## **2.9 The Contribution of Overseas Trained Teachers to the public school sector**

The review of literature on the contribution of overseas trained teachers to the public school sector explores the value of overseas teachers' participation in the public education sector in various countries of the world. Researchers have observed multiple ways in which overseas trained teachers created a positive effect on global classrooms. This review of literature has the potential to highlight the benefits of employing overseas trained teachers in foreign classrooms. It might also be constructive to know about the worth that administrators as well as the overseas

trained teachers themselves consign to their own presence in foreign schools. Table 2.5 illustrates these observations in two categories:

Table 2.5

*Contribution of overseas trained teachers to the public schools*

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**2.9.1 The positive impact of overseas trained teachers on students**

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**2.9.2 Perspectives of overseas trained teachers**

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*2.9.1 The Positive Impact of Overseas Trained Teachers on students*

Researchers have observed that overseas trained teachers might create certain positive impacts on students. Some of such impacts were observed by Bella (1999) in Queensland schools. She noted that overseas trained teachers were able to bring specific and individualised cultural knowledge to teaching. Furthermore, overseas trained teachers brought their hands-on, lived experiences of different lifestyles and ways of thinking to the Australian education system. Bella (1999) recorded that overseas teachers ensured that students understood the fundamentals of learning, particularly concepts relating to literacy and numeracy. Many overseas trained teachers were commended for their motivation, commitment and diligence. Most of these overseas teachers also had a great respect for learning, which could benefit Queensland children (Bella, 1999). In addition, Bella (1999) observed that overseas teachers were hopeful that they could instill in children a greater respect for adults and authority in general. Some of the overseas teachers in Bella's (1999) research commented on their commitment to prepare formal lessons in areas of modelling manners, good conduct and honesty (Bella, 1999). Daniels (2007) as cited in Collins and Singh (2010) observed in his review of teacher recruitment in Western Australia that "State and Federal legislation and standards suggest that overseas-trained teachers represent a valuable social and economic resource and are able to make positive contributions to education within Australia" (p. 19). These observations

were indications that overseas teachers might indeed make a difference in the Australian classrooms.

Miller (2008) reported the impact of overseas trained teachers on London schools. Many Head Teachers of London schools referred to overseas trained teachers as the 'bridge builders' as they created connections between different cultures for the entire school community. These Head Teachers also commented that overseas trained teachers brought with them a 'can do' and 'will do' culture, which had a huge impact on paving a pathway for better academic results for students. Overseas trained teachers helped establish workforce stability, high expectations on pupils in relation to attainment of better grades, model pupil behaviour and pupil mentoring (Miller, 2008). Arvizu and Saravia-Shore (1990) as cited in Miller (2008), noted that overseas teachers also shared their international teaching experiences and approaches with their students. Vandeyar et. al (2014) observed that overseas trained teachers brought in good work ethics, willingness and cooperation. Arvizu and Saravia-Shore (1990) cited in Miller (2008) noted that the work ethic of overseas trained teachers could result in curriculum enrichment and also facilitate culture sharing and cultural literacy, which was defined as the ability to understand and appreciate the similarities and differences in the customs, values and beliefs of one's own culture and the cultures of others (Arvizu and Saravia-Shore, 1990 in Miller, 2008).

Elbaz-Lewisch (2004) observed that due to differences in cultural values and lack of initial acceptance by the students, overseas trained teachers needed to put in extra effort to 'make a place' for themselves in a school community. For overseas trained teachers, making a difference was seen as important and they endeavoured to do so by paying attention to student outcomes and helping individual pupils to make something of their lives. Elbaz-Lewisch (2004) observed that overseas trained teachers made a difference by investing their energies in initiating projects, confronting authorities if necessary and trying to bring about changes in their schools. These teachers experienced an unusual sense of failure if they became



unsuccessful in their endeavours. Failure in their endeavours often led overseas trained teachers to question their own values and those of their surroundings.

Subedi (2008) observed that overseas teachers often intervened to foster dialogues that interrupted stereotypical and biased perspectives of students at schools. This was especially for the fact that overseas teachers embodied immigrant subjectivities and could help in better assimilation of international students to local culture in schools. Oloo (2012) observed that as a coloured teacher in a Canadian school, he could view teacher diversity as having some potential to create a positive effect on the education system and the community at large. For example, teachers of different ethnicity could inspire students from racial minority groups and were better positioned to establish relationships and deliver relevant pedagogy to them. Deewar and Visser (2000) reported some comments from principals in New Zealand schools that employed overseas trained teachers. The principals who were interviewed, described overseas trained staff members as "well qualified, experienced, committed, determined to succeed, keen, positive and a breath of fresh air" (p. 34). These observations confirm overseas trained teachers' positive impact on foreign classrooms.

### *2.9.2 Perspectives of overseas trained teachers*

Overseas trained teachers have also shared their own perspectives on the influences of their presence in foreign schools. Miller (2008) reported that two teachers from St. Vincent and Jamaica reflected that in spite of facing many challenging situations, teaching in the United Kingdom had transformed them to be better teachers. The challenges that they faced forced them to "examine every aspect of the teaching and learning process" (p. 26) to create an overall professional advancement. These ongoing evaluations of pedagogical practices helped these teachers to contribute better to the education system of the United Kingdom.

In a study conducted in the United Kingdom by Cole and Stuart (2005), some of the student teacher participants from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds reported that they were invited to organise theme-weeks on Sikhism and Africa respectively. The purpose of these theme weeks was to spread cultural awareness amongst the educational community. Two other overseas teachers reported that they were encouraged to present a discussion on their cultural diversity and origins. In the same quoted study (Cole & Stuart, 2005), overseas student teachers claimed to have used their own backgrounds to deliver lessons on slavery, Asian culture and black dance in the curriculum. These overseas trained teachers claimed that only by trying to make a difference do they stabilise their positions as teachers in the minds of the students and the community.

## **2.10 Summary**

The section on the contribution of overseas trained teachers to the public school sector considered the different ways in which overseas trained teachers had enriched various education systems around the world. Overseas teachers could use their international experiences, cultural knowledge, high expectations and real life representations to inform and educate students. Examples from the review of literature suggest that positive efforts from overseas trained teachers to be part of a school community might help them to assimilate faster in a new environment.

## **2.11 Conclusion**

The review of literature explored four different aspects of overseas trained teachers' experiences, both nationally and internationally. First, the review discussed issues that overseas trained teachers might face prior to obtaining a teaching position in a public school. Four issues were explored and they were: the availability of background information prior to arrival; registration process and English Language Testing; country posting; and teacher orientation programs. Secondly, the review of literature explored the experiences of overseas trained teachers after obtaining a teaching position in a public school. Nine experiences were explored and they were: pedagogical dissonance and disparity in teaching methods; language and

communication; curriculum; mentoring; behaviour management; racism, xenophobia and cultural ignorance in school communities; stress due to declining morale; indicators of discrimination; and positive experiences and outcomes. Thirdly, the review considered the effects of immigrants' cultural values on the overseas teachers' adaptation process. Four possibilities were explored and they were: human behaviour and self-identity; effects of cultural attributes on immigrants' adaptability; effects of cultural dissonance on the adaptation process of overseas trained teachers as immigrants; and resultant stress due to cultural expectations and workplace reality. Lastly, the review outlined the positive contribution of overseas trained teachers to the public school sector. The two sections in this category were: the positive impact of overseas trained teachers on students; and perspectives of overseas trained teachers.

From the review of national and international literature, it became clear that overseas trained teachers face multiple challenges before and after obtaining a teaching position in a public school in any foreign country, including Australia. It also became apparent that overseas teachers' cultural attributes, including their personal values, beliefs and attitudes play an important part in negotiating the degree of challenges that they might have to experience while adapting to their new teaching positions in a foreign country. This study thus endeavours to explore the three above mentioned sections in-depth through answering the three research questions and compare the experiences of the research participants with those of the available literature for the last five decades. The following chapter presents the research plan used in this inquiry.

## **Chapter Three: Research Plan**

### **3.1 Introduction**

The review of literature in Chapter Two focused attention on four major themes, namely: contextual experiences of overseas trained teachers prior to obtaining a teaching position in a secondary public school; contextual experiences of overseas trained teachers after obtaining a teaching position in a secondary public school; effects of cultural values on immigrants; and contribution of overseas trained teachers towards the Australian education system. Three research areas developed from the review of literature and formed the focus of the study. These research areas were contextual experiences of overseas trained teachers before obtaining a teaching position; contextual experiences of overseas trained teachers after obtaining a teaching position; and effects of culture on the adaptation process of overseas trained teachers to secondary public schools of Australia.

This chapter is concerned with the research plan employed to explore the central questions of the study, which are:

1. What are the contextual experiences of overseas trained teacher prior to obtaining a teaching position in a public secondary school of Western Australia and South Australia?
2. What are the contextual experiences of overseas trained teachers after obtaining a teaching position in a public secondary school of Western Australia and South Australia?
3. How do overseas trained teachers' cultural values and perspectives affect their adjustment processes to the public secondary schools of Western Australia and South Australia?

The focus of this research was to examine the contextual experiences of overseas trained teachers, as well as to delve into the effects of cultural values on the teachers' adaptation process to their new work environment. A constructive approach was deemed appropriate for this research as it suited the objective of this study. The type of research within constructivism is qualitative in nature (Dudovskiy, 2016). In a

qualitative research, the researcher examines the subjective perception of an environment from the perspective of the person examined (Heylink & Tymstra, T1993). Researchers may be involved in interviewing, observing and analysing data, activities central to qualitative research (Merriam, 2014). These features suited the focus of this study, which was an exploration of overseas trained teachers' contextual experiences in relation to their cultural perspectives. The approach adopted for this study was qualitative, interpretive and planned around a case study. The outline of the Research Plan is presented in Table 3.1

Table 3.1

*Overview of Chapter Three: Research Plan*

Subheading	Subdivision
<b>3.1 Introduction</b>	
<b>3.2 Theoretical Framework</b>	
<b>3.3 Epistemology</b>	<b>3.3.1 Constructivism</b>
<b>3.4 Theoretical Perspective</b>	<b>3.4.1 Interpretivism</b>
	<b>3.4.2 Symbolic Interactionism</b>
<b>3.5 Methodology</b>	<b>3.5.1 Case study</b>
	<b>3.5.2 Instrumental Case Study</b>
	<b>3.5.3 Criticism and defence</b>
	<b>of Case Study Methodology</b>
<b>3.6 Method</b>	<b>3.6.1 Semi structured in-depth interviews</b>
	<b>3.6.2 Field notes</b>
<b>3.7 Research participants</b>	
<b>3.8 Trustworthiness</b>	<b>3.8.1 Credibility</b>
	<b>3.8.2 Transferability</b>
	<b>3.8.3 Dependability</b>
	<b>3.8.4 Confirmability</b>
<b>3.9 Methodological rigour</b>	
<b>3.10 Data analysis</b>	<b>3.10.1 Data reduction</b>
	<b>3.10.2 Data display and coding</b>

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### 3.10.3 Drawing conclusion and verification

#### 3.11 Ethical considerations

#### 3.12 Design Summary

#### 3.13 Conclusion

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## 3.2 Theoretical framework

The theoretical framework of a research inquiry relates to the rational basis of the study. The theoretical framework establishes a connection between the theoretical and practical aspects in an inquiry (Neuman, 2011). Crotty (1998) identified four interconnected elements of any research process: methods, methodology, theoretical perspective and epistemology. Methods are techniques that are used for data collection and analysis. Methodology explains the strategy, plan or design behind the researcher's choice of methods. Theoretical perspective is the "philosophical stance" (Crotty, 1998, p. 3) behind the selection of methodology. Epistemology is the theory of knowledge embedded in the theoretical perspective and thereby in the methodology (Crotty, 1998). Figure 3.1 designates the research framework that has been implemented in this study.

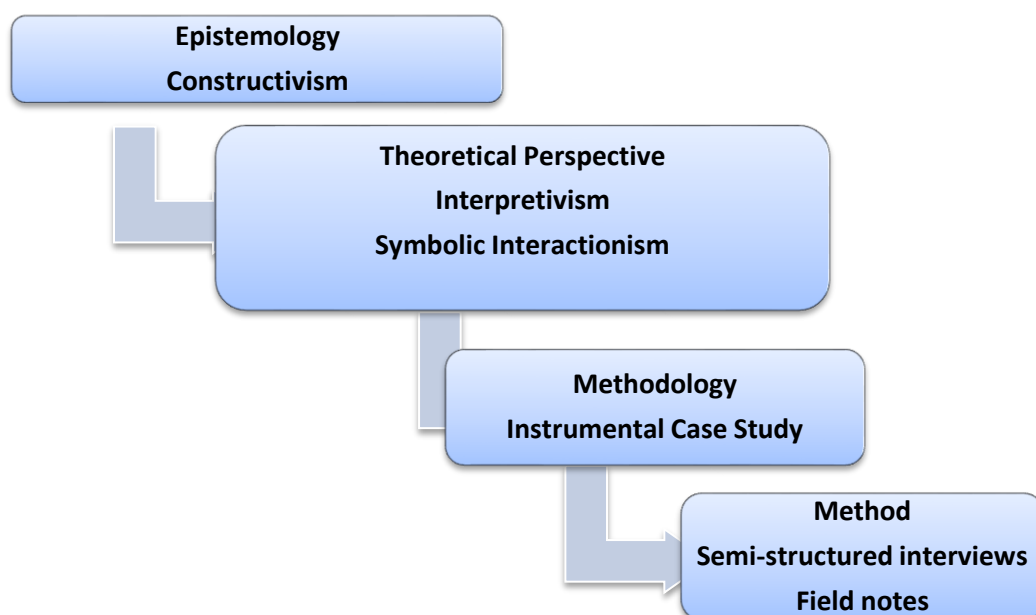


Figure 3.1 *Research Framework for the study*. (Adopted from Crotty, 1998, p. 4)

### 3.3 Epistemology

The epistemological approach of this study is constructivism. Constructivist research focuses on analysing meanings embedded in textual and verbal accounts of personal histories and narratives of the participants (Bisman & Highfield, 2012). Social constructivists are of the opinion that individuals seek to understand the world in which they live and work. Individuals tend to seek subjective meanings of their experiences. These meanings can be quite complicated, varied and multiple, leading the researcher to look into the intricacies of the views rather than narrowing meanings into few categories or ideas (Creswell, 2014). In constructivist research, the researchers accept that their own backgrounds often shape their interpretation. Often the researchers position themselves in the research to acknowledge how their interpretation is informed by their own personal and cultural experiences (Creswell, 2014). A Constructivist epistemological approach suited my own position as an overseas trained teacher in relation to the research topic 'Contextual experiences of overseas trained teachers in public secondary schools of Western Australia and South Australia in reference to their cultural perspectives'.

Constructivism is typically seen as an approach to qualitative research (Creswell, 2014). For instance, Crotty as stated in Creswell (2014), identified three specific assumptions in discussing constructivism, all of which relate to qualitative research. First, human beings give meaning to the world they are interpreting and hence qualitative researchers ask open ended questions so that the participants can share their point of view with them. Secondly, people's cultural and social perspectives have great influence on the way they make sense of the world and hence a knowledge and understanding of participants' background is necessary for the qualitative researcher. That is, the interpretation of the available information by qualitative researchers are often coloured by their own background and experiences. Thirdly, meaning is often generated through social interaction and so qualitative researchers mainly gather data through field interviews. Therefore, unlike quantitative researchers who seek causal determination, prediction, and generalisation of findings, qualitative researchers seek instead illumination, understanding, and extrapolation to similar situations (Hoepfl, 1997). Qualitative research deals with a real world setting, where the researcher does not attempt to manipulate the phenomenon of interest (Patton, 2001, p. 39). Qualitative research thus has the capacity to explore in-depth, the nature of overseas trained teachers' experiences, in reference to their understanding of the world and its reality.

Denzin and Lincoln (1998) observed that a researcher understands that qualitative research is an interactive process which might be influenced by one's gender, class, race and ethnicity. Therefore, selecting concepts that adequately represent people's experiences and attribute meanings is central to conducting a rigorous qualitative research. Rigour refers to the methods that qualitative researchers develop to ensure that they faithfully represent the stories and experiences of the people under study (Morse et al., 2002). Key qualitative methods include participant-observation studies and in-depth interviews (Walter, 2010). This study concentrated on exploring the perception of overseas trained teachers in their natural settings by using in-depth interviews and researcher generated field notes as methods of data collection.



The personal context of a researcher is an important determiner in choosing a particular research epistemology. This research draws on my particular background as an overseas trained teacher from a non-English speaking and culturally and linguistically diverse background. I am currently (as of 2016) teaching in an Australian public school and therefore, this situation enabled me to have a deeper understanding of the participants' experiences and perspectives. As Bryman (2008) suggested, a qualitative researcher "seeks close involvement with the people being investigated, so that he or she can genuinely understand the world through their eyes" (p. 394). Being an overseas trained teacher working in a public secondary school in Western Australia myself, I could connect and identify with many of the experiences of overseas trained teachers at a professional and personal level. My close involvement with the participants and the phenomenon under study is a justification for the choice of a constructivist, qualitative approach in this research.

### **3.4 Theoretical Perspective**

A theoretical perspective is the philosophical stance that lies behind the choice of methodology. It is a statement of the assumptions brought to the research task and reflected in the methodology (Crotty, 1998). The theoretical perspective used in this inquiry was interpretivism.

#### *3.4.1 Interpretivism*

An interpretive approach within qualitative research focuses on understanding social reality instead of producing a simple explanation of events. Crotty (1998) suggests that interpretivism is often linked to the thought of Max Weber (1864-1920), who observed that human sciences are concerned with *Verstehen*. *Verstehen* is a German term that involves assimilating, perceiving and understanding the nature and significance of a phenomenon (Elwell, 1996). The aim of an interpretivist researcher therefore, "is to understand this complex and constructed reality from the point of view of those who live in it" (Schram, 2003, p. 33). Interpretivism is underpinned by the philosophical assumption that "reality is constructed by each individual based on their life experiences and thus these individual constructions

result in the existence of multiple perspectives of reality" (Lincoln & Denzin 2003, p. 35). This research has endeavoured to explore, interpret and understand the social reality of working in Australian public schools from the perspectives of twelve overseas trained teachers from different countries and cultural backgrounds.

### *3.4.2 Symbolic Interactionism*

The three main streams of Verstehen or interpretivist approach to human inquiry are hermeneutics, phenomenology and symbolic interactionism (Crotty, 1998). The interpretivist stream that was used in this research was symbolic interactionism. Crotty (1998) observes that symbolic interactionism is concerned with

Those basic interactions whereby we enter into the perceptions, attitudes and values of a community, becoming persons in the process. At its heart is the notion of being able to put ourselves in the place of others (p. 8).

Blumer (1969) as quoted in Crotty (1998), noticed that human beings act towards conditions, based on the meanings that they assign to them. These meanings are derived from social interactions that people have with others in society. The meanings from these interactions are filtered through an interpretive process that becomes inherent in people's dealing mechanism with circumstances that they encounter. Interpretations of meanings are given to situations through a person's own cultural understanding (Blumer, 1969 in Crotty, 1998).

The main mode of human interaction is language, complemented by other symbols, gestures and expressions that enable the researcher to evaluate a participant's perceptions, feelings, attitudes and intentions. The researcher also endeavours to understand a participant's mindset that is established within the fabric of a given culture (Crotty, 1998). Furthermore, Berg (2007) also noted in this regard that

The meanings that people attach to their experiences and the objects and events that make up these experiences are not accidental or unconnected. Both the experiences and the events surrounding them are essential to the construction of meanings. To understand behavior, one must first understand

the definitions and meanings and the processes by which they have been created (p. 13).

Consistent with the symbolic interactionist approach, this research undertook to explore the cultural attributes of overseas trained teachers that shaped their specific experiences in the secondary public schools of two Australian states. The data were collected from the personal context of each of the twelve overseas trained teacher participants. The intention was to delve into the participants' experiences from the standpoint of their cultural mindset. Considering the research from the focus of interpretivism and the filter of symbolic interactionism, the methodology chosen for this study was a case study design. The methodology supporting this research will now be discussed.

### **3.5 Methodology**

Walter (2010) defined methodology as "the world view lens through which the research question and the core concepts are viewed and translated into the research approach we take to the research" (p. 13). Kothari (2004) described methodology as an explanation of the logic behind the choice of a method for conducting a research in a given context. Methodology defines why a certain method was chosen against all other available methods for a particular study, thus enabling the research results to be evaluated, both by the researcher and others (Kothari, 2004). Case study is the chosen methodological approach for this research.

#### **3.5.1 Case Study**

Yin (1994) defined case study as an empirical inquiry that considers a contemporary phenomenon within its practical context, especially when the boundaries between a given phenomenon and its context are juxtaposed or unclear. Yin (2003) suggested that a case study approach might also be undertaken for bringing to light some of the contextual conditions that might be related to explaining a phenomenon in a study. Furthermore, Yin (2003) observed that a case study approach should be undertaken when a study aimed to answer the "how" or "why" questions (p. 4). Zainal (2007) observed that "case studies, in their true

essence, explore and investigate a contemporary real-life phenomenon through detailed contextual analysis of a limited number of events or conditions, and their relationships" (pp. 1-2). Zainal (2007) also noted that "through case study methods, a researcher is able to go beyond the quantitative statistical results and understand the behavioural conditions through the actor's perspective"(p. 1). In addition, Tellis (1997) observed that case study has the potential to "give a voice to the powerless and voiceless"(p. 4). The justification behind the choice of case study methodology in the light of the above mentioned observations will now be discussed.

This research explored a contemporary phenomenon within its practical context, by considering the contextual experiences of overseas trained teachers in the Australian secondary public schools of Western Australia and South Australia. The experiences of overseas trained teachers (phenomenon) are examined against the context (Australian public schools) and cannot be considered independently of each other. The gathered data consisted in-depth representation of overseas teachers' experiences from their perspectives. In this regard, the research attempted to delve into 'how' overseas trained teachers might have coped amidst multiple unknown, uncertain and challenging contexts. Furthermore, the study attempted to assess the cultural reasons behind 'why' those conditions might have arisen. The topic of contextual experiences of overseas trained teachers in Western Australia and South Australia, in reference to their cultural attributes is not widely explored. Through this study, I have attempted to highlight the issues and perspectives of overseas trained teachers for the wider education community. In doing so, I have aimed to give a voice to the "voiceless and powerless", which in the context of this study are the voices of some of the overseas trained teachers teaching in public schools of Western Australia and South Australia. The nature of this inquiry, therefore, supports the choice of a case study methodology. The particular case study approach will now be discussed in further detail.

### 3.5.2 *Instrumental Case Study*

Stake (1995) as cited in Baxter and Jack (2008) identified three types of case studies: collective, intrinsic and instrumental. Stake (1995) defined a collective case study as an approach where the researcher can examine more than one case. An intrinsic case study approach can be used, if the case itself is of interest. Finally, an instrumental case study, which was the approach used in this study, has the potential to provide the researcher with an insight into an issue or refine a theory (Stake, 1995 cited in Baxter & Jack, 2008). An Instrumental case study can be defined as:

The study of a case (e.g., person, specific group, occupation, department, organization) to provide insight into a particular issue, redraw generalisations, or build a theory. In instrumental case research the case facilitates understanding of something else (Sage research methods, 2010).

Tellis (1997) noted that an instrumental case study can be used when the researcher wants to understand more than what is obvious to the observer. Further, Stake (1995) as cited in Baxter and Jack (2008) suggest that in an instrumental case study

The case is of secondary interest; it plays a supportive role, facilitating our understanding of something else. The case is often looked at in depth, its contexts scrutinized, its ordinary activities detailed, and because it helps the researcher pursue the external interest (p. 549).

Through the analysis of contextual experiences of twelve overseas trained teachers from varied nationalities, this instrumental case study investigated a bigger and more intricate picture of multiple, subjective experiences of overseas trained teachers in secondary public schools of Western Australia and South Australia.

Further, the quality of overseas teachers' experiences might be dependent on their cultural variables. Through the use of instrumental case study, this research undertook not only to describe the contextual experiences of overseas trained teachers, but also interpret the cultural reasons behind those experiences. The conclusions drawn from this research based on an instrumental case study have the potential to provide a picture for future aspirant overseas teachers, to appreciate what it might be like to work as an overseas trained teacher in an Australian public school. The criticisms and defence of using case study methodology will now be discussed.

### *3.5.3 Criticisms and defence of case study methodology*

Case study methodology is often criticised for its different shortcomings (Zainal, 2007). The main shortcomings with case study methodology are its lack of robustness and rigour and its unmanageable length. The first shortcoming to consider is the lack of robustness (Yin, 1984). Roy (2005) defined 'robustness' in research as

An adjective referring to a capacity for withstanding 'vague approximations' and/or 'zones of ignorance' in order to prevent undesirable impacts, notably the degradation of the properties to be maintained (p. 2).

To ensure 'robustness' in a study, the framing of an appropriate research design is of utmost importance. In the research design for this study, the case consisted of interview data from twelve overseas trained teachers from twelve different nationalities, complemented by researcher generated field notes. Any common phenomenon or replication of themes that might emerge from the data can thus enhance transferability. Transferability through a replication of themes, has the potential to withstand "vague approximation" or "zones of ignorance" (Roy, 2005), thus enhancing robustness.

The second concern regarding case study is the lack of rigour (Yin, 1984). 'Rigour' is defined by the Oxford Dictionary (2015) as "the quality of being extremely thorough and careful". A lack of rigour in the context of this study would thus mean a lack of accurate interpretation of data. I took measures to ensure that the outcomes were accurate and not biased and that the case study approach might be used to allow the authentic "voices of the participants to be heard" (Rowley, 2002. p. 25). In order to maintain impartiality in my methodological approach, I have validated interpretation of data with the participants. I have mailed the participants the synopsis of her interpretation of data for their validation, thus ensuring rigorousness in the study.

The third common concern with case study is that it can often be very lengthy (Yin, 1984). To counteract this shortcoming, the data in this research were organised and managed systematically. This study utilised the analytical approach of Miles and

Huberman (1994) which followed the three steps of data reduction, data flow and conclusion drawing and verification. Only relevant sections of data were used for thematic analysis. Thus, the amount of data was manageable. Zainal (2007) observed that in spite of these three main criticisms, researchers still find it helpful to deploy case study methodology in real-life situations to explore social issues and problems. The next section will discuss the method of data collection that was used in this research.

### **3.6 Method**

A research method is defined as "the technique or practice used to gather and analyse the research data" (Walter, 2010, p. 4). The methods of data collection used in this research were in-depth semi-structured interviews and field notes.

#### *3.6.1 Semi-structured in-depth interviews*

The focus of this research was to explore the contextual experiences of overseas trained teachers from their own cultural perspectives. Semi-structured in-depth interviews suited this objective of the study as it allowed the participants to express their point of view without any stress or inhibition. As Patton (1980) observed "fundamental principle of qualitative interviewing is to provide a framework within which respondents can express their own understanding in their own terms"(p. 205). Patton (1980) also observed that the function of conducting an interview is to find out what is "in and on someone else's mind" (Patton, 1980, p. 196). Semi-structured in-depth interviews allowed overseas trained teachers to openly express their ideas and viewpoints to me. It also offered the participants a platform to provide recommendations to improve certain contextual issues that were related to their experiences.

A semi-structured interview uses an interview guide, which is defined as "a list of themes and questions prepared before the interview" (Traver, 2010 p. 301 cited in Walter, 2010). An interview guide allows the researcher to adapt, as quite often the

researcher might choose to deviate from the given set of questions should something more important and meaningful come to the surface in the process of discussion (Bryman, 2012). Patton (1980) outlined six kinds of questioning that might be used as part of an interview. These kinds of questions include: experience/ behaviour questions, opinion/value questions, feeling questions, knowledge questions, sensory questions and background/demographic questions. Patton (1980) noted that a combination of all these kinds of questions might result in a compilation of a more wholesome and enriched data. Experience/ behaviour questions are aimed at describing experiences, behaviours, actions and activities of the participant. Opinion/value questions are designed to inform on how people interpret and think about their situations. Feeling questions deal with emotional responses from the participants about their circumstances. Knowledge questions delve into the factual information that the participant might have on a given topic. Sensory questions allow the interviewer to enter into the sensory perceptions of the participants in order to explore their understanding of situations. Finally, background/ demographic questions help to identify characteristics of the participants like age, education, ethnic background, cultural values and identities (Patton, 1980). In this research, the participants were presented with all the six kinds of questions (Appendix A) as suggested by Patton (1980). Table 3.2 outlines the different types of questioning that were used to explore data for the three research questions.

Table 3.2

*Linking of specific research questions to the interview guide*

Specific Research Questions	Interview guide and question types based on Patton (1980)
<b>1. What are the contextual experiences of overseas trained teachers prior to obtaining a teaching position in a secondary public school of Western Australia and South Australia?</b>	1,2,9,10 Background/demographic; experience/behaviour; knowledge; feeling and sensory questions
<b>2. What are the contextual experiences faced by overseas trained teachers after obtaining a teaching position in a secondary public school</b>	2, 4, 5, 11. Experience/ behaviour; opinion/value; feeling/knowledge and sensory questions



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**of Western Australia and South Australia?****3. How do overseas trained teachers' cultural values and perspectives affect their adjustment processes to the secondary public schools of Western Australia and South Australia?**

3, 6, 7, 8,12.

Experience/ behaviour; opinion/value; feeling; knowledge; sensory and background/demographic questions.

The interviews of the twelve overseas teacher participants were conducted in Western Australia and South Australia. The interviews were conducted at times and locations that were mutually convenient for both the participants and myself. Five of the participants chose to be interviewed at their schools and seven others, in locations away from their workplaces where the participants felt safe, secure and relaxed. These locations were either at my house, or that of the participant. The interview of one particular overseas trained teacher from South Australia was conducted after the completion of a conference in Adelaide for overseas trained teachers on 4th October, 2012. Two other interviews of overseas teacher participants from South Australia were conducted on Skype at chosen dates and times of the participants, as circumstances did not permit otherwise.

Prior to the interview, the participants were provided with the interview guide (Appendix A) and information letter with contextual information on the research project (Appendix B). The participants were informed that they could withdraw from the research at any point of time without any negative consequence. I also obtained a consent letter from the University psychologist (Appendix C) to assist any participant with counselling should the need arise, during or after the interviews. No such issues arose. The interviews were between 45 to 60 minutes in length and at least on five occasions, the interviews continued over an hour. Bryman (2012) observed that digital recording is convenient for research purposes as the recordings can be played repeatedly without risking the quality of recording. In this regard, Bryman (2012) also noted that the interviews are best analysed by transcription, as it helps the researcher to be as unbiased as possible and provide authentication of data at a later date. In this research, all the participant interviews were digitally recorded and later transcribed.

### *3.6.2 Field Notes*

I have recorded my unstructured observations and salient thoughts during each of the interviews in the form of field notes. While conducting the interviews, I concentrated on comprehending and analysing different modes of communications of the participants. As Tessier (2012) observed "field notes are also important because ideas and memories from the interviews will most likely be lost further down in the research process" (p. 448). In order to remember important observations during the process of interviews, I took relevant notes on the participants' reactions to the interview questions, their body language, tone, language, emotions and gestures. By recording such observations, I attempted to obtain an indication of the effects of contextual experiences on the participants.

Field notes helped me to make mental notes of my reflections and assisted me in probing further on different avenues of discussions. My own experience as an overseas trained teacher in a public school aided me in the quest for gathering added information on the participants' contextual experiences. As Wolfinger (2002) noted "irrespective of any formal strategies for note-taking, researchers' tacit knowledge and expectations often play a major role in determining which observations are worthy of annotation" (p. 1). During the interviews, I took notes on anything that I believed stood out as important and recorded information that appeared to be useful for future thematic analysis of data.

## **3.7 Research Participants**

The participants of this research were overseas trained teachers from Western Australia and South Australia. In the case of Western Australia, I had initially approached the Education Department of Western Australia for permission to access their database of overseas trained teachers for the purpose of maximum variation sampling. The personnel in the Education Department of Western Australia could not provide the requested information to me on the grounds of protecting the privacy of its teachers. I then personally approached overseas trained teacher colleagues in secondary schools in different locations of Western Australia with a view of

maximum variation sampling. Nine overseas trained teacher participants were recruited from Western Australia. At the Adelaide conference for overseas trained teachers in 2012, I had the occasion to meet three willing overseas trained teacher participants, who contributed to the research with their valuable feedback on teaching in public secondary schools of South Australia. Hence, the research data were gathered from a total of twelve overseas trained teacher participants from Western Australia and South Australia, who willingly consented to participate in this research.

In spite of the practical difficulties imposed by circumstances, the participants of this research were purposely chosen from different ethnic backgrounds. Bryman (2012) noted the value of purposeful sampling

Very often the researcher will want to sample in order to ensure that there is a good deal of variety in the resulting sample, so that sample members differ from each other in terms of key characteristics relevant to the research question (p. 418).

Maximum variation sampling can ensure variety in key characteristics of the participants. Patton (1990) described maximum variation sampling as an attempt by the researcher to identify "diverse characteristics or criteria for constructing the sample" (p. 172). Patton also observed that the strength of a maximum variation sample lies in the fact that "any common patterns that emerge from great variation are of particular interest and value in capturing the core experiences..." (p. 172). In addition, Patton (1990) noted that analysis of a small, but diverse sample should yield "(1) high-quality, detailed descriptions of each case, which are useful for documenting uniqueness and (2) important shared patterns that cut across cases and derive their significance from having emerged out of heterogeneity" (p. 172). The maximum variation sample used in this study consisted of representatives from twelve different countries (Table 1.1). The participants present a combination of overseas trained teachers from both Anglo-Celtic, native English speaking (NEST) backgrounds and culturally and linguistically diverse and non-English speaking background (CALD/NESB). The intention behind providing this maximum variation sampling was to provide a wider picture of contextual experiences of overseas

trained teachers in the secondary public schools of Western Australia and South Australia from their cultural perspectives.

The participants also included members from both genders and represented a range of age groups. Eight of these teacher participants had worked in rural (schools in the country region) and remote regions (located far from any centre of population) of Western Australia and South Australia. Four others worked only in metropolitan (densely populated urban) schools. In total, there were four teachers from Anglo-Celtic, native English speaking background (NEST) and eight from culturally and linguistically diverse and non-English speaking backgrounds (CALD/NESB). Since the recruitment of the participants was solely performed through a my personal invitation, the process of selection was constrained by a number of factors that included: limited circle of colleagues, willingness of participants to contribute and the need for selective, purposeful sampling. All the participants were experienced in teaching in secondary public schools (catering for students in years 7-10) of Western Australia or South Australia. Some participants also taught in senior secondary (catering for students in years 11-12) schools. Table 3.3 shows the distribution of gender and teaching locations of the participants in the study.

Table 3.3

*Distribution of gender and teaching locations of the research participants*

<b>Gender</b>	<b>Remote</b>	<b>Country</b>	<b>Metropolitan</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Male</b>	1	3	1	5
<b>Female</b>	2	2	3	7
<b>Total</b>	3	5	4	12

### 3.8 Trustworthiness

Researchers need to take serious note of a potential for bias in a qualitative research process. This issue has been discussed by Miles and Huberman (1984) who wrote:

Each (qualitative researcher) is a one-person research machine: defining the problem, doing the sampling, designing the instruments, collecting the information, reducing the information, analysing it, interpreting it, writing it up (p. 230).

Considering the notion of the qualitative researcher being a "research machine" (Miles & Huberman, 1984), errors of judgement might be a possibility. Guba (1981) has proposed four criteria which, qualitative researchers should pursue in order to establish the trustworthiness of their research. These criteria are: credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability. Table 3.4 indicates the procedure used in this study to establish trustworthiness.

Table 3.4

#### *Establishing trustworthiness*

Quality Criterion	Research Technique
3.8.1 Credibility	My background and experience Examination of previous research on the topic In-depth interviews Member checking
3.8.2 Transferability	Purposeful sampling Thick description of the phenomenon Comparison of outcome with research in similar field
3.8.3 Dependability	Case study protocol Detailed discussion of the research design and its implementation Reflection on the limitations of the research
3.8.4 Confirmability	Reference to researcher's beliefs and assumptions In-depth, methodological description

### *3.8.1 Credibility*

Credibility or internal validity deals with "the question of how the research findings match reality" (Merriam, 2009, p.213). This research has followed four criteria of ensuring credibility as recommended by Shenton (2004) and they are: background and experience of the researcher, examination of previous research findings, in-depth interviews and member checking. First, my background is significant in this research. I am an overseas trained teacher from a culturally and linguistically diverse and non-English speaking background who has taught in a secondary public school of Western Australia for twelve years (as of 2015). I could identify my experiences with the 'phenomenon' under study, which is an exploration of contextual experiences of overseas trained teachers in reference to their cultural attributes. Secondly, the review of literature for this research encompassed relevant published studies on the topic over almost four decades. This review of literature provided a foundational base for the topic under research. Thirdly, the method of data collection for this research involved semi structured, in-depth interview, which are "a remarkably effective means of collecting information about a wide range of topics..." (Travers 2010, p. 311, cited in Walter, 2010). Finally, I cross checked my interpretation of data with the participants. This activity was undertaken to ensure truthful and unbiased representation of data.

### *3.8.2 Transferability*

Transferability is concerned with the extent to which the "findings of one study can be applicable to other situations" (Merriam, 2009, p. 223). Purposeful sampling, thick descriptions of the phenomenon and comparisons of outcomes with research in similar field are the strategies used in this research to ensure transferability. Given these strategies, research outcomes may vary with the change of context. To counter this issue, Merriam (2009) suggested that through a maximum variation in purposeful sampling, a greater range of application by readers or consumers of research can be ensured. As previously mentioned, maximum variation sampling in this research was achieved through a careful selection of participants. Merriam (2009) also observed that a thick description of the findings with adequate evidence of quotations from participant interviews can safeguard transferability. Accordingly,

a thick description of the phenomenon of varied experiences with quotations (wherever applicable) from overseas trained teachers was provided in this study. In addition, I found similarities between the results of this study with those of other studies on the experiences of overseas trained teachers in the review of literature. These similarities helped strengthen transferability.

### *3.8.3 Dependability*

Dependability in research implies that the same research conducted under same context, method and participants should yield the same results (Shenton, 2004, Erlandson, Edwards, Skipper & Alen, 1993). Miles and Huberman (1994) considered dependability in a research, as a process for ensuring consistency. Shenton (2004) observed that since a change of context may vary the research outcome on the same topic, some measures need to be taken to assure dependability of the research. Shenton (2004) noted that "to address the dependability issue more directly, the processes within the study should be reported in detail, thus enabling a future researcher to repeat the work, if not necessarily to gain the same results" (p. 71). Shenton also observed in this respect that the research design may be viewed as a "prototype model" (p. 71). The three criteria for ensuring dependability were: describing the research design and its implementation; the operational detail of data gathering; and reflective appraisal of the project. This research has used a case study design to comply with the dependability criteria. Moreover, I have presented a detailed discussion of the research design and its implementation along with the operational detail of data gathering in this chapter. My reflection on the limitations of the research was provided in chapter one.

### *3.8.4 Confirmability*

Confirmability in qualitative research is the adherence to objectivity by the researcher (Shenton, 2004). It entails the researcher making an unbiased and objective interpretation of the data (Guba, 1981). Bryman (2008) suggested that while complete objectivity might be impractical in social research, the researcher must act in good faith and be mindful not to allow the research process or its

findings to be swayed by personal values and theoretical inclinations. Shenton (2004) observed that to establish confirmability in qualitative research, a researcher must take steps to ensure "that the work's findings are the result of the experiences and ideas of the informants, rather than the characteristics and preferences of the researcher" (p. 72). He also suggested that to assure confirmability, the researcher should be aware of one's own biases and predispositions and take steps to safeguard data from being influenced by one's own personal judgement. Shenton (2004) further noted that confirmability can be achieved by following methodological description to allow the research results to be scrutinised. In addition, he suggested that the use of diagrams to demonstrate an audit trail. In confirmation with Shenton's (2004) observation, a detailed description of methodological procedure was provided in this chapter along with relevant diagrams (Figures 3.1, 3.2, 3.3) for clear understanding of the research process, thereby ensuring confirmability. Moreover, I have digitally taped and transcribed the interviews for analysis and used excerpts from data to provide examples of emerging themes. I have also confirmed my interpretation of data by validating my narrative synopses with the participants to ensure confirmability.

### **3.9 Methodological Rigour**

Mays and Pope (1995) observed that the basic strategy to ensure rigour in qualitative research is "systematic and self conscious research design, data collection, interpretation and communication" (p. 110). Mays and Pope (1995) also noted that rigour can be shown in qualitative research by the use of "systematic, non-probabilistic sampling," which can serve as a representative of "specific groups of people who either possess characteristics or live in circumstances relevant to the social phenomenon being studied" (p. 110). Australia attracts overseas trained teachers from multiple countries. A choice of several participants from a single country or ethnic background might have narrowed the provision of a bigger picture of the 'phenomenon' under study. Thus to provide an authentic and rigorous representation of overseas trained teachers' experiences in the public secondary schools of Western Australia and South Australia, a systematic, purposeful and non-random (non-probabilistic) method of participant selection was utilised.



Furthermore, to ensure rigour in the study, I have provided the participants with the opportunity to validate my interpretation of data. Eleven participants responded and I mailed their narrative synopses to them for their affirmation. One participant from a remote area of South Australia was uncontactable. However, she had informed me during the interview that she did not wish to validate my interpretation of data, as she had faith on my interpretation. Mays and Pope (1995) also observed that the researcher might engage in self-retrospection and evaluate how far the study's thematic outcomes might match with the facts already known in the chosen field of study. In relation to this recommendation, I have compared and confirmed my findings with the observations established in the review of literature. The interview questions were checked by supervisors, panel judges (research proposal) and peers at a presentation in Advanced Research Seminar (October, 2012).

### **3.10 Data Analysis**

An interpretive analysis of results was used to explore the contextual experiences of overseas trained teachers in the public secondary schools of Australia in relation to their cultural perspectives. The intention behind the use of interpretive analysis of data was to illustrate a real life picture of varied experiences faced by overseas trained teachers in the Australian public secondary schools. As Willis (2010) observed in this regard, the "task of qualitative data analysis is meaning-making" (p. 409). For the analysis of the qualitative data, this study utilised the analytical approach proposed by Miles and Huberman (1994). This approach follows "three concurrent flow of activity: data reduction, data flow and conclusion drawing/verification" (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 10). Figure 3.2 shows the components and approach of the analysis process used in this study.

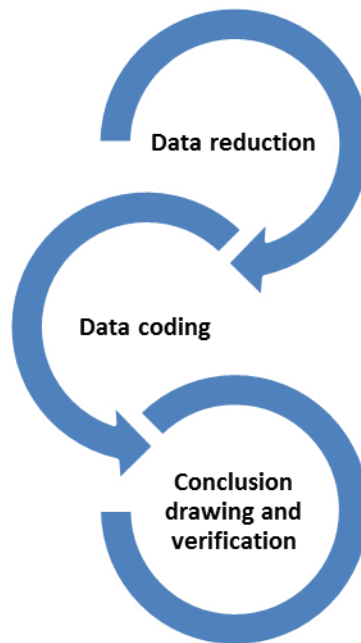


Figure 3.2 *Components of data analysis* (Adopted from Miles and Huberman, 1994, p. 12)

### 3.10.1 Data Reduction

Miles and Huberman (1994) observed that data reduction consists of "focusing, simplifying, abstracting and transforming the data" (p.10) that originally appear in a researcher's field notes and transcriptions. These authors also believed that an anticipatory data reduction process starts even before the actual data gathering process. Furthermore, Miles and Huberman (1994) observed that data reduction continues throughout the life of a qualitative research project. Data reduction is an integral part of an analysis, as the researcher continuously chooses relevant sections of data for projection. Only those sections of the data that could lead to a valid conclusion are chosen. Coding starts early in the analysis process. Miles and Huberman (1994) described codes as "tags or labels for assigning meaning" (p. 56) to the gathered information. Codes can consist of words, sentences or even paragraphs applied to 'chunks' of information to streamline it into different sections (Miles & Huberman, 1994). In this study, coding was an iterative process. Data analysis started with initial coding and was followed by a refined coding. These

coded information, then led to emerging themes. The process of data analysis that was utilised in the study is shown in figure 3.3.

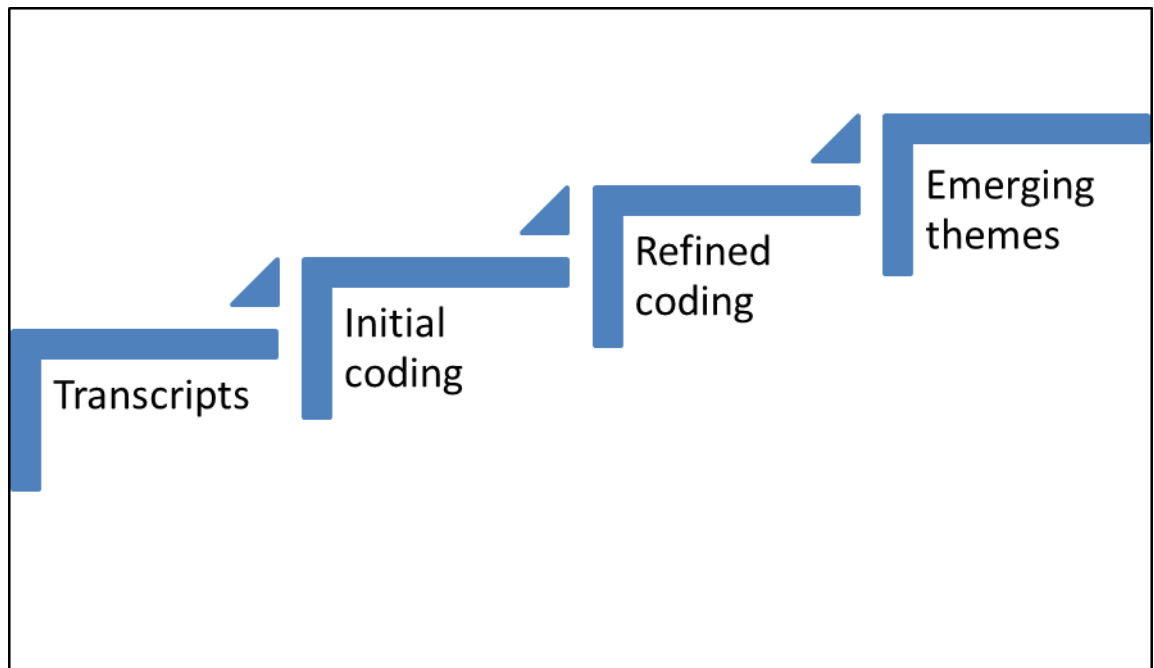


Figure 3.3 *Process of data analysis*

### 3.10.2 *Data Display and Coding*

Data display is the next important step in the data analysis model that was utilised in this study. Miles and Huberman (1994) described data display as "an organised, compressed assembly of information that permits conclusion drawing and action" (p. 11). Displays help the researcher to comprehend the flow and trend of information. Observing the data display, the researcher can either draw a concluding theme, or move on to the next step of analysis. A researcher chooses the type of display that might suit the purpose of the study. Miles and Huberman (1994) stressed the need of systematic and powerful displays while conducting qualitative data analysis. In this study, displays were segregated under the three research questions. The displays helped me to draw major themes. Some examples of data displays that were used in the study to reach emerging themes are shown in tables 3.5-3.7.

Table 3.5

*Examples of coding to identify emergent themes for specific research question one: What are the contextual experiences faced by overseas trained teachers prior to obtaining a teaching position in a public secondary school of Western Australia and South Australia?*

<b>Initial Coding</b>	<b>Refined Coding</b>	<b>Emerging Themes</b>
<b>Information (websites/ other sources)</b>	Background available information	Lack of in-depth information on post-immigration life in Australia
<b>Language testing Workshops Delays/red tapes Salary disparities</b>	Varying (statewise) registration Requirements	Teacher registration and English language requirements
<b>Department Orientation</b>	Orientation/mentoring/ initial support	The teacher orientation process

Table 3.6

*Examples of coding to identify emergent themes for specific research question two: What are the contextual experiences faced by overseas trained teachers after obtaining a teaching position in a public secondary school of Western Australia and South Australia?*

<b>Initial Codes</b>	<b>Refined Codes</b>	<b>Emerging Themes</b>
<b>Induction/Support/Curriculum/Resources</b>	Induction experiences	School-based induction and on the job mentoring
<b>Disruptive classrooms/ Swearing/Failure to follow Instructions</b>	Classroom and yard management	Student behaviour management issues
<b>Disparities in accent/prejudice Low ability classes/ Lack of staff support/ Bullying/Isolation at work/ workplace harassment</b>	Discrimination/harassment	Workplace harassment and discrimination
<b>Better lifestyles/ new learning curve/incentives</b>	Positive experiences of overseas trained teachers	Rewards and acceptance

Table 3.7

*Examples of coding to identify emergent themes for specific research question three: How do overseas trained teachers' cultural values and perspectives affect their adjustment processes to the public secondary schools of Western Australia and South Australia?*

Initial Codes	Refined Codes	Refined Themes
<b>Loud classroom/ Shocking student behaviour/No definite curriculum/ Multitasking different expectations and identity</b>	Differences in cultural expectations and identity	Culture shock
<b>Womanly values (Middle- Eastern)/ Cleanliness/Difference in perspectives/Affluence and apathy</b>	Effects of culture	Effects of culture on the adaptation process of overseas trained teachers to public secondary schools

### 3.10.3 Drawing Verifications and conclusions

Drawing verifications and conclusions is the last and final section of the three-step data analysis process outlined by Miles and Huberman (1994). The data display and the data reduction help researchers to assess and understand emerging themes and draw conclusions. The whole analytical process is iterative and so the researcher has to continually revisit the data to verify the authenticity of the conclusions. In this study, I monitored the data for the emergence of "recurring patterns"(p. 277). Throughout the process of data display and data reduction, I tried to establish "patterns of variables involving similarities and differences among categories"(p. 278). Verification of individual narrative synopsis by participants helped me to confirm my conceptualisation of themes.

### 3.11 Ethical Considerations

It is essential to adhere to an ethical code of conduct while conducting a research (Resnik, 2011). Such a consideration is necessary, as it promotes the aims of research and also the values that are important in a collaborative work involving multiple participants. An ethical code of conduct also helps in upholding research accountability, ensures public support and promotes multiple other moral and social values that are important to the society (Resnik, 2011).

I commenced this study at Murdoch University in Semester Two, 2009 and transferred to The University of Notre Dame Australia, in January, 2015 due to supervisory issues. I obtained ethics clearance from the Murdoch University Ethics Committee, (Project No. 2012/60, Appendix D). The University of Notre Dame, Australia accepted the continuation of my proposed study by granting an 'Advanced Research Standing' (acceptance of part of the study successfully completed at another institution). As was mentioned earlier, I have provided the participants beforehand with an interview guide, participant consent form and background information of the research. Participants were aware of the fact that they were not obligated to continue with their interview, should they not wish to do so. A psychologist was made available to assist the participants if so required. Fortunately, this service was not needed. Furthermore, to enhance ethical considerations, I mailed invitations to the participants for individual validation of researcher's interpretation of data. With the permission of the participants, I saved digital audio files of the interviews. All the above mentioned preserved data will be destroyed and deleted five years after the submission of thesis.

### 3.12 Design Summary

Table 3.8

Schedule	Source	Activity
<b>2012 September</b>	Murdoch University	Ethical clearance
<b>2012 October-2013</b>	Murdoch University	Interviews (South

<b>March</b>		Australia and Western Australia)
<b>2013 (March-November)</b>	Murdoch University	Transcripts and analysis of data
<b>2014 (June- December)</b>	Murdoch University	Break from studies
<b>2015 January</b>	University of Notre Dame, Australia	Transfer to UNDA
<b>2015 January-December</b>	University of Notre Dame, Australia	Draft report
<b>2016 1<sup>st</sup> Semester</b>	University of Notre Dame, Australia	Submit thesis

### 3.13 Conclusion

This chapter discussed the research plan of the study. This study focused on exploring contextual experiences of overseas trained teachers in public secondary schools of Western Australia and South Australia with reference to their cultural perspectives. The chapter explained the justification behind the choice of an interpretivist perspective within constructivist qualitative research and delineated the logic behind selecting an instrumental case study design. The method and difficulties of data collection were explained, along with details of data analysis. Further, the chapter considered elements of trustworthiness, rigour and ethical consideration. The chapter concluded with a design summary. The following chapter will present data under the three research questions of the study.

## **Chapter Four: Presentation of Results**

### **4.1 Introduction**

The purpose of this chapter is to present the results on this instrumental case study examining the contextual experiences of overseas trained teachers before and after obtaining a teaching position in a public secondary school of Australia, in relation to their cultural perspectives. The data underpinning the results were collected through qualitative semi-structured in-depth interviews of twelve overseas trained teachers (henceforth referred to as participants), working in public secondary schools of Western Australia and South Australia along with researcher generated field notes. The results are organised into three sections based on the three research questions. For the convenience of the readers the three research questions are reiterated in this chapter.

### **4.2 Specific Research Question 1**

*What are the contextual experiences faced by overseas trained teachers prior to obtaining a teaching position in a public secondary school of Western Australia and South Australia?*

This section presents data on a range of experiences the participants underwent from the time of their migration till they obtained a teaching position in a public secondary school of Western Australia and South Australia. The section is divided into four main sub-sections, which are again further divided into categories. The main sub-sections are shown in table 4.1.



Table 4.1

*Contextual experiences of overseas trained teachers before obtaining a teaching position in a public secondary school of Western Australia and South Australia*

<b>4.2.1 Lack of in-depth information on post immigration life in Australia</b>
<b>4.2.2 Teacher registration and English language requirement in the states of Western Australia and South Australia</b>
<b>4.2.3 Lifestyle changes and relocation for obtaining permanency with the Education Department</b>
<b>4.2.4 The teacher orientation process</b>

#### *4.2.1 Lack of in-depth information on post immigration life in Australia*

The data presented in this sub-section are divided into two categories: perceived lack of information on everyday life in Australia; apparent inadequacy of online information on registration and resources; and the observed danger of misinformation on teaching locations.

##### *4.2.1.1 Perceived lack of information on everyday life in Australia*

One participant believed that she did not receive enough information from relevant sources on post migration personal life in Australia. Barbara from Ireland reflected that she was immensely surprised when another colleague enquired if she (Barbara) had completed her annual tax return. Barbara was surprised as she had not received this basic information beforehand. According to Barbara

They need big changes –they need clarification. There has to be a physical pack for teachers when they set foot in the country and what they are entitled to. In my country, as a teacher, you can never apply for your tax back.

Barbara felt frustrated about the lack of clarity in the readily available basic information on everyday life in South Australia.

#### *4.2.1.2 Apparent inadequacy of online information on registration and resources*

Two participants were unhappy about the clarity of information that was provided by the Education Department websites, both in Western Australia and South Australia. Anne from the United Kingdom said that she had wanted to view the Western Australian curriculum framework and gain a feel of the pedagogical requirement before migrating to Western Australia. However, she was barred from navigating the Western Australian Education Department website, as she did not have an 'E' number (Education Department employee identification number) at the time of her migration (2007). Anne recalled

I wanted to have a look at the framework and how it looked like, but I wasn't able to get to the website, because it didn't have an 'E' number. I think I would have been, if I had an 'E' number. The basic structure of the system was very hard to find out. It should be easier.

Another participant, Manako from Japan, remembered that she had to find out by herself how to meet the prerequisites of becoming a teacher in South Australia. She could not find help or appropriate information from relevant sources. She recalled "it was difficult to find information on what to do or where I should go!" Gradually, she discovered the necessary information by herself. Lack of resources and information on Education Department websites of Western Australia and South Australia frustrated these participants.

#### *4.2.1.3 Observed danger of misinformation on teaching locations*

One participant claimed that overseas trained teachers coming from abroad might be victims of misinformation in Australia. According to Bob from South Africa, some information provided by different sources, might indeed be misleading and might need to be doubly checked. He said

A Maths teacher from Ireland, a teacher I knew, was told yeah, Tom Price-lovely town, near the coast! We had another teacher from Singapore, who rocked up and she informed the authorities that she had a skin problem with heat. Yet she was sent to Tom Price at 46 degrees heat. She didn't like bugs, cockroaches and stuff, but it's like that there in Tom Price. It's a desert and seriously was not the right place for her. Yeah, they take advantage.

A majority of the participants thought that the information that was provided on the Education Department websites may not always show the reality of job situations. For example, participants remembered reading success stories of teachers (both local and overseas trained) on Education Department websites and were encouraged to accept country locations. They were especially excited by the prospect of a relaxed lifestyle in rural and remote regions of Western Australia and South Australia. Participants commented that there was nothing wrong in advertising the positive aspects of those positions. However, they believed that it was equally important for them to know more about the practical aspects of those positions. Some of the information that the participants would have appreciated were: the need to withstand extreme climate, remoteness of some locations, unavailability of resources, extreme behaviour pattern of students and cultural expectations. The participants believed that a mention of some of those real life challenges and practical circumstances might have helped the Education Department websites appear more truthful, valid and dependable.

#### *4.2.2 Teacher registration and English language requirements in the states of Western Australia and South Australia*

The data presented in this sub-section are divided into two categories: Anomalies of Teacher registration process in Western Australia and South Australia; and English language requirements for teacher registration in the states of Western Australia and South Australia.

##### *4.2.2.1 Anomalies of Teacher registration process in Western Australia and South Australia*

The teacher registration process was time consuming for many participants. For example, in 2008, Alice from Canada claimed that she had to face registration issues in Western Australia with the then Teachers' Registration Board 'The Western Australian College of Teaching' or (WACOT), currently (as of 2015) known as the Teacher Registration Board of Western Australia or (TRBWA). Initially, as part of the immigration process, she had to pay \$70 for an International Criminal Check and then once in Australia, she was again asked to provide a Criminal Clearance Certificate from Canada (her country of origin). It did not make any sense to Alice,

as she thought that Canadian police clearance must have been included in the International Criminal Check. Alice also thought that clear information on teacher placement in public schools was not given through the Education Department Website of Western Australia. Alice recalled that in Canada, registration of teachers was conducted through teacher registration boards in different provinces, but the teachers still had to apply separately for individual teaching positions at schools. She was not aware of a different teacher placement system that was prevalent in Western Australia at that time (2008). Rumi from India initially settled in New South Wales and later migrated to Western Australia along with her husband, who also was a teacher. She was surprised by the differences in the teacher registration policies of the two states. Different policies of teacher registration requirements of the states and territories of Australia, caused confusion in the minds of participants.

#### *4.2.2.2 Registration red-tapes and the need to replicate paperwork*

Barbara from Ireland claimed to have experienced a number of issues with the Teacher's Registration Board of South Australia. She had sent all the required paperwork for police and character verification details to the South Australia Teacher Registration Board before leaving Ireland. However, the South Australian teacher registration board demanded the same paperwork again. Barbara already had a job offer in South Australia before leaving Ireland, but due to registration issues she could not immediately take up her position. Barbara had to wait for a clearance from the South Australian Teacher Registration Board. She also had to live on her own without a job, until the registration backlog was cleared. Further, some of her certificates were not accepted by the state. For example, Barbara reported that she had a first aid certificate from the St. John's Ambulance in Ireland, but it was not accepted in South Australia. Since a first aid qualification was compulsory for teachers in South Australia, Barbara had to pay to renew her certificate. While waiting for the completion of her teacher registration in South Australia, Barbara claimed to have rented a house in Adelaide, which by misfortune was next to that of a drug dealer. Barbara said

It cost me \$300 per week and it was next to a dealer's house and I was raided by the police four times. I had drug dealers calling to the house, I had drug

addicts calling to the house. On 11-12 nights very suspicious men called, thinking we were drug dealers. After taking that for a few months I could not take it anymore and as a result, I left and lost all my bond of \$1800 for the house. Being Irish Catholic, we don't do drugs, my kids don't do drugs, or lead a party life. I wanted them to get degrees, do their work, do their best. I could not take anymore.

Later, when Barbara reached her designated school after the successful completion of her registration process, she perceived that her school was indeed one of the hardest places to teach in the whole state.

#### *4.2.2.3 English language requirements for teacher registration in the states of Western Australia and South Australia*

A majority of the participants had to appear for the 'International English Language Testing System' (IELTS) as part of the migration process. However, depending on the state in which the participants wished to teach, there were different English language requirements for teacher registration purposes. Participants from Western Australia did not have to appear for a separate English language exam to become registered as a teacher in the state. However, the participants from South Australia had different stories to narrate. Barbara from Ireland, whose native language was English, reported that she had to pass an English language proficiency test, as per the teacher registration policy of South Australia at the time of her employment. She did not understand the reason behind her need to prove her capability in English, as she was a native speaker. Barbara recalled, "I had to sit for IELTS as well, even though I have taught through English, have done everything through English, even then they made me do it". When she expressed her opinion to the South Australian Registration Board, Barbara felt that the officials could not give her a satisfactory reply.

A second participant from South Australia, Manako, reported another experience while trying to become registered as a Japanese 'Languages other than English' (LOTE) teacher in South Australia. In order to qualify as a LOTE teacher, she was required to attend Technical and Further Education (TAFE) and complete the needful requirements to gain an 'Australian Second Language Proficiency Rating' (ASLPR). Manako said

I found out how to be a teacher in Australia. First of all I have to be good in English. I studied English at the TAFE for about a year, the TAFE teachers helped me a lot, they taught me the way I should go.

Manako had to spend quality time at the TAFE to update her English skills before applying for the position of a LOTE teacher in a public school of South Australia. She was thankful to the teachers at the TAFE, who guided her through the teacher registration process in South Australia.

#### *4.2.3 Lifestyle changes and relocation for obtaining permanency with the Education Department*

The data presented in this sub-section are divided into two categories: incentives and permanency through country postings; and loneliness and separation from family.

##### *4.2.3.1 Incentives and permanency through country postings*

The Western Australian Education Department offered teachers (both local and overseas trained) the option of accepting country placements to achieve permanency with the Department. Seven of the nine participants (Ali, Leyla, Lawrence, Nadjuhin, Hayat, Bob, Anne) from Western Australia taught in rural and remote locations to begin their teaching career in the state and all of them obtained permanency with the Department of Education of Western Australia. In South Australia, however, there were fewer permanent jobs on offer (4 October, 2012). All the three participants from South Australia were frustrated with this issue. Barbara claimed that she had to accept a Fixed term offer for a teaching position in a remote part of South Australia, in order to commence her professional career in Australia. Furthermore, at the Overseas Trained Teachers' Conference held in Adelaide, on 4th October, 2012, I witnessed many other overseas trained teachers from South Australia expressing their frustrations about the fact that they were continually offered fixed term teaching positions.

#### *4.2.3.2 Loneliness and separation from family*

Many participants had to accept readily available country positions to commence their teaching career in Australia. Country locations created a sense of loneliness for the participants, as many of them had to leave their families in the cities, to take up their teaching positions in different rural and remote regions. Five participants (Ali, Leyla, Hayat, Nadjuhin, Barbara) thought that their remote work locations created personal issues for them. Ali from Iraq reported that he had to leave his family and friends to start his teaching career in a rural location of Western Australia. He had to spend four years at that rural location before he was able to transfer back to Perth through the Western Australian Education Department's centralised transfer process. Hayat from Eritrea also had to leave his young family to pursue his teaching career in a rural location. He reflected that he continually missed his family throughout his stay at that rural location. Hayat tried to commute back as frequently as possible over most weekends. Finally, after trying in vain to get a transfer back to Perth to be with his family, he resigned his position to rejoin his family. Hayat reflected

I left because I thought I will be staying for two years and I probably will be relocated again, but after 2 years there I saw that it was not easy to come back to Perth. I was told that my family was not coping 100% because they were missing their father. That's the issue really. There was no fixed time to come back. I did not know if I was going to stay for another year, two years, three years, four years, five years – I did not know. I couldn't plan for my life, so it was a hard, hard decision for me, I had to come back to Perth. I tried to get a position in Perth, but after two years it was very hard to get one. So I decided to leave teaching completely. I took a year off from teaching and at the same time I went back to my old profession of being a chemist.

Forced separation from family made Hayat resign his teaching position and even change his profession.

Nadjuhin from the Ukraine came to Western Australia after her marriage and started her teaching career in a remote location of the state. She had to leave her husband in Perth to pursue her level 3 posting in remote regions of Western Australia for three years. During that time her husband quite often drove considerable distances to be with her. Nadjuhin also took every opportunity to join

her husband in Perth, whenever an occasion arose. Nadjuhin indicated that she had to undergo a range of challenging experiences when she started her teaching career in remote locations of Western Australia. Describing the challenging conditions in remote Western Australia Nadjuhin observed

We had to feed the kids, provide them with all the resources like stationery and books. A lot of the kids came to school because it was too cold outside and we had the heating and air conditioning at the school. There was still a problem with petrol sniffing in the community, so some of the teenagers were exposed to that. ... Kids had access to alcohol. There was shooting in the community, so one felt insecure living there. Most of the people who worked there had 6 foot fences around their houses and could not get out after dusk. It wasn't very safe.

In addition, Nadjuhin was required to follow strict regional indigenous rules in terms of her dress code and cultural etiquette. She felt uncomfortable at the prospect as she was unaccustomed to those rules. One more participant, Barbara found out only after commencing her teaching position in a remote location of South Australia, that she had to "import food and vegetables" and drink stored rainwater. Drinking water was stored in a tank and Barbara fell sick immediately after commencing teaching in that location.

However, not all challenging experiences had to lead to negative consequences. For example, another participant, Bob from South Africa also found himself lonely and isolated in his remote teaching location in Western Australia. He had very few options for after-hour entertainment and this condition forced him to socialise and know his community much better. As Bob said

Look, there are two ways you can approach living in a country. One, you can hide in your house and pretend that you are not there. Two, get involved in the community and quickly you will find that this is not too bad.

The above mentioned experience illustrates that irrespective of multiple difficulties due to circumstances, a combination of a friendly disposition and a positive frame of mind might have the potential to change the quality of human experience and transcend contextual challenges.



#### *4.2.4 The teacher orientation process*

The data in this sub-section are divided into two categories: apparent lack of consistency in the teacher orientation process of the Education Departments of Western Australia and South Australia; and recent changes in the teacher orientation process.

##### *4.2.4.1 Apparent lack of consistencies in the teacher orientation process of the Education Departments of Western Australia and South Australia*

There was an apparent lack of consistency in the Departmental teacher orientation process for new overseas trained teachers, both in Western Australia and South Australia. In Western Australia, three participants reported that they had received teacher orientation, while six others commented that they did not. Ali, Leyla, Hayat and even myself, who joined the Western Australian Education Department in the early 2000s, did not receive any teacher orientation from the Education Department of Western Australia. In South Australia all the three participants indicated that they did not receive any teacher orientation. Barbara in South Australia, who joined her school in a remote community mid-year, also claimed to have a similar experience. She reported that she did not have the opportunity to attend any teacher orientation program and had to assess the situation in her school herself. Moreover, as a Head of Learning Area (HOLA) she had to take charge without any assistance. Teacher orientation in South Australia was generally provided by individual schools after the appointment of teachers, through Education Department websites (4 October, 2012). Steven from Zimbabwe worked in the United Kingdom before migrating to Australia. He recalled that the teacher orientation program in the United Kingdom was "one of the best of its kind". Steven also did not receive any teacher orientation from the Education Department of South Australia. However, Steven noted that he did not face much difficulty in adjusting to the public secondary schools of South Australia. Steven's previous experience of teacher orientation in the United Kingdom helped him to deal with his new environment. The third participant from South Australia, Manako also confirmed that she did not receive any orientation before the commencement of her teaching position.

During the interviews, I discovered from one of the participants (Nadjuhin) that back in 2003 when I had just joined the Education Department of Western Australia, Murdoch University conducted training programs for overseas trained teachers. Formal information from the Education Department of Western Australia was not provided in that regard. Nadjuhin attended the course and found it quite helpful, but since that program was not endorsed by the Education Department of Western Australia, she had to pay for the course. In later years, some changes in the teacher orientation process were put into place by the Department of Education of Western Australia. Anne recalled that in 2007, as part of her 457 visa (employer sponsored, temporary residence), she was classified as an overseas trained teacher and had to attend a formal teacher orientation program organised by the Department of Education of Western Australia. Anne said

We had to go through two days of induction and there were very young teachers there who haven't taught –they were just qualified. It is the same as we do in England, so for me it was like a refresher course. We also had information on Aboriginal history and current issues in schools and what an AIEO officer would do in school. That was really interesting, because a lot of teachers have absolutely no idea about the stolen generation or anything.

Anne reflected that this information was both useful and relevant, as many participants did not have any contextual information on Western Australian schools.

Alice from Canada also had to undertake an intensive teacher orientation program conducted by the Department of Education of Western Australia in 2008. She reported that she was given work packages designed for overseas trained teachers and was provided with copies of the curriculum, worksheets to level assessments (levelling was the prevalent mode of assessment at that time). Along with all those theoretical practices, she also had to attend practical teaching sessions at a school where she worked for 10 days (with pay). After observing her teaching and coping mechanisms over this time, the Deputy Principal of that particular school signed her off with a satisfactory report. Alice was allowed to obtain a public secondary school placement, only after the completion of that teacher orientation process.

#### *4.2.4.2 Recent changes in the teacher orientation process*

A comment on the current (2015) teacher orientation process in the two states of Western Australia and South Australia is pertinent in the light of the orientation experiences discussed. The Department of Education of Western Australia has made further changes to the induction process for all new teachers, including those from overseas (Institute of Professional Learning, 14 December, 2015). According to the new changes, the orientation program for overseas trained teachers in Western Australia is no longer mandatory. However, the new teachers, including those from overseas, might choose to attend a professional learning opportunity on paying a fee of \$100. The new teachers will receive a certificate of attendance if they choose to take the opportunity. The proposed program consisted of information on

- An introduction to the Department and the benefits of teaching in the Western Australian public school system.
- Effective practice in classroom management, instructional strategies and skills.
- Western Australian Curriculum and Department of Education resources.
- Evidencing the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers and differentiating curriculum (Taken from Entry and Orientation Program, Department of Education of Western Australia, 2015).

I was unable to locate relevant online information on the orientation of overseas trained teachers in South Australia. I also contacted the Teacher Registration Board (TRB) of South Australia and later the Human Resources Division of Department of Education and Child Development of South Australia (DCED) by phone on 22nd December, 2015. The personnel, both in the Teacher Registration Board of South Australia and Department of Education of South Australia confirmed that there were no programs in place for the orientation of overseas trained teachers (22 December, 2015). However, currently (as of 2015), the Teacher Registration Board of South Australia is running a compulsory seven hour Mandatory Notification Training (MNT) course on 'Responding to Abuse & Neglect: Education and Care' (RAN) for all new teachers, including those from overseas (Teacher Registration Board of South Australia, 2015).

#### 4.2.5 Summary

This section presented data on the experiences of participants before obtaining a teaching position in a public secondary school of Western Australia and South Australia. Participants were frustrated by the apparent lack of information on post immigration life in Australia and the observed danger of misinformation. Participants found registration red tape, inconsistency in English language requirements and fixed term offers very frustrating, especially in South Australia. Some of the participants found themselves in difficult situations after accepting country positions and there did not seem to be any consistency in the teacher orientation programs provided by the Education Departments of Western Australia and South Australia.

#### 4.3 Specific Research Question 2

*What are the contextual experiences faced by overseas trained teachers after obtaining a teaching position in a public secondary school of Western Australia and South Australia?*

This section presents data on different experiences that participants underwent after obtaining a teaching position in a public secondary school of Western Australia and South Australia. This section is divided into five sub-sections which are again divided into different categories. The main five sub-sections are shown in table 4.2.

Table 4.2

*Contextual experiences of overseas trained teachers after obtaining a teaching position in a public secondary school of Western Australia and South Australia*

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##### 4.3.1 School based induction and on the job mentoring

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##### 4.3.2 Pedagogical dissonance and unrealistic expectations of teachers from the school administrators

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##### 4.3.3 Student behaviour management issues

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#### 4.3.4 Workplace harassment and discrimination

#### 4.3.5 Rewards and acceptance

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##### *4.3.1 School-based induction and on the job mentoring*

The data presented in this sub-section is divided into two categories: apparent inadequacy in school-based induction; and positive experiences of on-the-job mentoring and collegial support.

##### *4.3.1.1 Apparent inadequacy in school-based induction*

School-based induction introduces teachers to their new work environment, but participants, especially those who joined mid-year, reported that did not receive proper induction. Alice from Canada thought that organising a mid-year induction might be a problem for some schools. Four other participants, Ali, Leyla, Rumi and Hayat experienced overwhelming sensations of being totally out of control due to lack of a school-based induction. Bob from South Africa, joined a public secondary school in Western Australia from the beginning of an academic year, but he recalled that he did not receive much information from the school administration other than being given a blue book containing the school rules, expectations and behaviour management strategies. Barbara, who had to start her professional career in a South Australian remote public school said "because I was an experienced teacher, I was left alone to find out who can help me." All these participants believed that they had to face challenging situations as a result of apparent inadequacy of on-the-job induction.

##### *4.3.1.2 Positive experiences of on-the-job mentoring and collegial support*

However, a few other participants reported positive experiences of on-the-job mentoring and collegial support. For example, Manako from Japan recalled her positive experiences of collegial support. Manako started at a public secondary

school in South Australia from term two as a Language other than English (LOTE) teacher. On her very first day, the Principal called her to his office and talked to her for half an hour and then took her around for a tour of the whole school which she found very helpful. She also shared the same office with her line manager, who came to visit her class quite often and provided her with regular feedback on her performance. The line manager then invited Manako to observe her (line manager's) class in return. Manako was quite happy and grateful to her colleagues and administrators, who in spite of their busy mid-year schedule, continued to mentor and support her in their own little ways.

Along with Manako, other participants (Anne, Rumi and Bob) also experienced positive, on-the-job mentoring. Anne from the United Kingdom had high regards for her mentor at a rural school in Western Australia. She stated

She (her mentor) was fantastic. She was really organised! She could organise which files I need, the things that I need to know, great...she was brilliant! It was a total fluke that someone so good was in this school and had she not been there, I would not have gotten much in there. So thank God for her really.

Rumi from India also made complimentary remarks about her HOLA in one of the schools in which she had taught. The students in that particular school tried to put her through challenging situations as she came from a different country and had a distinct accent. The HOLA came to her rescue. As Rumi noted

She (HOLA) just made the kids shut their mouths. She explained to them 'see this is a teacher and you have to respect her no matter where she is from. If it is something you don't understand- ask one, two, three or hundred times. They are here to explain to you... anytime or after the class, recess... what are you doing then?'

Bob from South Africa complimented a remarkable Deputy at his first school, in a remote location of Western Australia. That Deputy worked at the same school for many years and had earned the respect of the community. Bob reflected that she (the Deputy) would do anything to back up and support the teachers, especially the new and overwhelmed members of staff. Bob recalled the experience with gratitude "I think all these (the kind support) make the experience a bit more reasonable." The teachers, school leaders and administrators who rose to the occasion beyond the call

of their duties to act as helpful mentors, were the ones who earned the enduring respect and appreciation of the participants.

#### *4.3.2 Pedagogical dissonance and unrealistic expectations of teachers from school administrators*

The data presented in this sub-section are divided into two categories: experiences of pedagogical dissonance; and unrealistic expectations of teachers from the school administrators.

##### *4.3.2.1 Experiences of pedagogical dissonance*

Six participants of this research Ali, Leyla, Manako, Nadjuhin, Rumi and Hayat came from countries that believed in different pedagogical approaches from those used in Australia. All of these participants had been educated through a formally prescribed, exam-based curriculum and found the Australian approach significantly different from their own. The necessity to cater to the different learning needs of students in the same classroom added to these teachers' professional challenges. On the other hand, Lawrence and Steven were educated in British curriculum and did not find the Australian pedagogical approach to be something different from their own. Ali thought that the standard of student achievement in Western Australia was quite low. He compared the academic achievement of a Yr 9 student in Iraq to that of a Yr 11 student in Australia. The rest of the participants did not experience any pedagogical dissonance as they were accustomed to similar curriculum in their home countries.

##### *4.3.2.2 Unrealistic expectations of teachers from the school administrators*

Two participants believed that there were unrealistic expectations placed on teachers. Participants indicated that often the teachers were expected to teach subjects outside the areas of their expertise with little or no prior notice. In 'Difficult to Staff' (DTS) schools, this strategy was often applied to fill multiple vacancies. For

example, Hayat from Eritrea claimed that he was given a varied timetable to fill in for classes of which he had no knowledge. Hayat reported that he was shocked when on his arrival at a rural school in Western Australia, he had to take over what he described as a "left over" time table. His timetable consisted of a combination of Maths, Science and Home Economics classes for the most challenging and disengaged students classified as "10D".

Barbara recalled that she grew up in Ireland with a very structured educational system and expected to find a similar pedagogical system in Australia. But to her surprise, when she started her position as a Science HOLA in a remote school of South Australia, the difference left her astounded. According to Barbara, Ireland and England had a precise and organised educational system where:

You teach A, then B, then C, then D and then E. You test it and then you move on. But here I am thrown in a Year 12 Agriculture class ... with cows and sheep and no knowledge of it and I did not know how to do it, but had to do it anyway.

The above example illustrates an extreme case of unrealistic expectations of teachers from the school administrators. Barbara had to continue with her work even without any support or resources, just to remain in her employment.

#### *4.3.3 Student behaviour Management Issues*

The data in this sub-section are divided into three categories: perceived disrespectful attitude of students; apparent lack of administrative support in resolving student behaviour; and insufficient strategies to manage student behaviour issues.

##### *4.3.3.1 Perceived disrespectful attitude of students*

The participants believed that the attitudes of the students towards their teachers were disrespectful. The majority of the participants observed that whenever students did not want to work or contribute to class activities, they tried to blame it on the accent of the teachers, complaining that they did not "understand" the teacher. In



addition, Leyla from Iran observed that often the students became upset if the teacher mispronounced their names, but the students could always get away with mispronouncing the teacher's name for the entire year. Leyla recalled that instead of calling her Mrs. Mazari they would refer to her as "I don't know some foreign teacher. Miss. Moss, Miss Mass...". In addition, both Leyla from Iran and Barbara from Ireland observed that parents complained if they tried to be more strict on improving student homework or work ethics.

Hayat from Eritrea held the view that students in Australia were granted excessive power to voice their opinion against any authority figure at a very young age. Hayat thought that the resultant outcome of uncontrolled classrooms was actually not the students' fault. He believed that the students simply did not learn how to take responsibility to handle this immense freedom. Barbara believed that in order to teach in a public secondary school, the most important skill required for teachers was the mastery of classroom management strategies. Barbara came across a teacher who had a Doctor of Philosophy, but could not successfully teach in a public secondary school. Barbara was of the opinion that in Australian schools, teachers' degrees did not matter as much as their capacity to manage classes.

#### *4.3.3.2 Apparent lack of administrative support in resolving student behaviour issues*

On most occasions, the participants believed that they did not receive assistance from administration, even if they needed urgent help in managing student behaviour in the classroom. For example, Rumi from India struggled with student behaviour management at her last school with little or no support from her colleagues even after lodging regular complaints against some offending students. As a result of her ongoing struggles, she observed that she was denied Extension (containing students of higher academic capability) and ATAR (students appearing for Australian Tertiary Achievement Rating) classes and instead was given only general and low ability classes. Rumi thought that she did not receive a chance to prove her worth as a teacher, as she could not rise above the behaviour management phase to deliver quality lessons to her students.

Lawrence from the Seychelles described his students as "defiant, rude, lacking respect and totally ignoring instructions". Lawrence thought that the behaviour of students in any particular school depended on the management strategies of the school Administration. Giving the example of his school, Lawrence stated that before the arrival of the current principal, the school was in a desperate situation. Students were running around knocking at doors, kicking and punching each other, till the new principal decided to become involved and change the situation. But, in spite of the overall improvement, classroom management still remained a teacher's responsibility. Lawrence decided to be innovative in his strategies to manage his classroom. He gave movie tickets as incentives to his students, in order to motivate them to work. Lawrence bought those tickets with his own money on a regular basis and gave them away as rewards to the top five students in each class. Lawrence reflected that the behaviour management of students was not only an issue with overseas trained teachers, but with all teachers across the board. He noted that the administrators also found themselves helpless in some situations. He recalled that a Deputy Principal in Port Hedland, with 10 years of experience elsewhere, could not last more than a week in her new position, due to unmanageable student behaviour.

#### *4.3.3.3 Insufficient strategies to manage student behaviour issues*

Participants thought that there were insufficient strategies on offer to manage student behaviour issues in Australian public secondary schools. For example, Anne from the United Kingdom was used to a similar pedagogical structure as that of Australia, but she also thought that too much was expected of teachers in Australia. She observed that in Australia, not enough measures were taken to extend sanctions against offending students.

What do you do when the students do not turn up for detention? You are chasing around to get them and I just think that there should be a lot more cohesion where you do the department detention.

As a HOLA of Science, Barbara had to supervise two very exhausted local teachers who were aged 59 and 65 respectively. Barbara observed that in their classrooms "kids are jumping on the ceilings, glassware is broken, there is danger in the classroom, the kids have gone nuts...". Barbara, being a new overseas trained

teacher, had no means of extending extra practical support to those struggling teachers. She felt depressed and lost. Lawrence undertook a course on Behaviour Management and Instructional Strategies (BMIS) as part of his performance management requirement at school. Lawrence thought that the content in the module of Behaviour Management and Instructional Strategies (BMIS) course was not helpful for him. He reflected that when the mentors came in to observe his classes, they did not tell him precisely: "Where and why you were going wrong...!" Lawrence felt that the mentors' general feedback was not good enough for him to understand and apply all the mandated strategies in a classroom situation.

#### *4.3.4 Workplace harassment and discrimination*

The data presented in this sub-section is presented under participants' experiences of workplace harassment and discrimination

##### *4.3.4.1 Participants' experiences of workplace harassment and discrimination*

'Harassment' is a term that describes any type of ongoing torment (Vocabulary.com, 2016). 'Discrimination' refers to behaviours directed against another group (Cliffsnotes, 2016). Some participants claimed that they experienced harassment and discrimination in their workplaces. For example, Rumi and Leyla from Western Australia believed that they did not receive any support from the administrators when they most needed it. Rumi was told by her HOLA and Deputy Principal that there were many complaints against her, but those complaints were never shown to her in writing. According to Rumi, the school had already formed a preconceived opinion against her and that was the reason they believed in the parents' complaints without giving her any chance to explain her situation. Rumi thought that she was not given enough opportunities to prove herself as an effective Mathematics teacher. Rumi also claimed to have followed through every instruction given by her HOLA and endeavoured to improve her classroom management skills, but nothing seemed to have worked. According to Rumi, her HOLA never tried to address the core issue of unmanageable student behaviour, but continually blamed her instead. In addition, Rumi also observed that members of the administration

refused to take responsibility and did not support her when she complained about the bullying behaviour of her students. She felt that she was left unsupported and had to fend for herself. Moreover, Rumi indicated that she was persecuted at her workplace for no logical reason. Rumi had approached the teachers' union over her ongoing workplace issues, but unfortunately her situation did not improve.

Similarly, Leyla also had similar views on workplace discrimination in a rural school of Western Australia. Leyla claimed that she was unfairly discriminated against by the authorities. She observed that successful lesson delivery and resultant outcomes depended to a large extent on the academic capabilities of students. Leyla believed that in her school, some teachers were only given Extension and ATAR classes. She reflected that it would thus be unfair to compare the student achievement report of teachers who taught upper end classes with those who had to teach extreme low ability, or even mixed ability classes. Nevertheless, she was still judged for the same a multiple time.

Participants reported instances of perceived workplace harassment. For example, Ali claimed that he was harassed by his HOLA simply because he was different and did not want to socialise after hours. Ali reflected that he did not want to socialise after hours, even after repeated insistence by the HOLA and other members of staff, as his priorities were different. When things became unbearable, he thought of resigning and even returning to Perth without informing anyone. At that time, one of his colleagues, an English teacher whom Ali gratefully remembered, advised him against it. In addition, Ali claimed that the HOLA also blamed him when some of his 17 year old students, (who struggled with basic addition at year 11), failed Geometry and Calculus. Ali reported that the HOLA conducted multiple meetings with him after hours to find out why those students had failed the subject. He thought that the HOLA failed to take into consideration the academic capabilities of the students and blamed him instead for their poor outcomes. Ali believed that he underwent all these experiences as he was culturally different from the other members of staff.

Leyla had to accept a remote teaching position to begin her teaching career in Western Australia. She felt that the remote school was very challenging, because of the way her fellow teachers behaved towards her. For example, Leyla told a story where a box full of Maths text books was removed by someone else from her classroom, but Leyla was blamed for losing those books. She could not prove her innocence and was told that she should learn to take responsibility for her classroom belongings. On another occasion, the school principal instructed Leyla that she should start her lesson as soon as the students entered her classroom. On the other hand, he told the students that if they felt too hot in the classroom, they might go out to continue their lessons under a tree. When Leyla did not permit her students to do so, the situation eventually gave way to a power struggle, as the students defied the teacher's instructions in preference to those of the principal's. Later, Leyla found out that the school administration wanted her only as a transient teacher to fill in an ongoing vacancy. Leyla believed that the school authorities wanted her out of the way, as soon as the previous teacher was ready to rejoin the school. She concluded that these apparent examples of harassment were meant to frustrate her into leaving her position, so that the previous teacher could be re-instated. These incidents were unfortunate examples of how workplace harassment and discrimination could add to the misery of overseas trained teachers.

#### *4.3.5 Rewards and Acceptance*

The data presented in this sub-section are divided into two categories: positive aspects of choosing Australia as a teaching destination; and participants' commendations and acknowledgements.

##### *4.3.5.1 Positive aspects of choosing Australia as a teaching destination*

Participants recalled multiple rewarding teaching experiences in the public secondary schools of Western Australia and South Australia. They appreciated the exclusive privileges in Australia, that were not easily available in their own home country. For example, two participants from the United Kingdom, Barbara and Anne, loved the weather and the opportunities that Australia had to offer. Barbara

chose Australia as her migration destination, as for her it was a "family package". Australia has provided new openings not only for her, but for her entire family. Australia offered Barbara's young adult children options for professional expansion. At her school, Barbara was also recognised by staff as a desirable HOLA and they wanted her to continue working in that capacity. The concept of a tax return in Australia also came as a pleasant surprise to Barbara. After her initial surprise, she simply felt elated at the prospect of getting back part of her money paid as tax. Barbara loved the beaches, sunshine and the people in Australia. Steven from Zimbabwe was very happy with the co-operation that he received from his colleagues and his superiors. Steven even felt that the students in South Australia were not too bad, in fact, they were much better behaved than his students in England.

Hayat from Eritrea enjoyed the collegial friendship, especially when everybody helped each other. Hayat also liked the salary and incentives which came with the teaching profession. According to his observation, the Education Department of Western Australia was trying its best to provide the most modern technology for students, even though he believed that many students did not value those opportunities at all. Hayat thought that the Education Department of Western Australia gave ample opportunities to teachers to improve their pedagogical and engagement strategies in classrooms, through professional development programs. Hayat reflected that these programs helped introduce him to many new and innovative learning strategies.

Participants also loved the term holidays and the generous offers of different kinds of paid leave that were on offer for the teachers. Some other common observations on rewarding experiences that participants highlighted were: relief payments for taking extra classes; the option of claiming back all associated educational costs as part of a tax return; and worker's compensation for unfortunate accidents at the workplace. Participants thought that these approaches were quite humane and progressive.

#### *4.3.5.2 Participants' commendations and acknowledgements*

Participants thankfully acknowledged many positive aspects of the broader school community in Australia. Anne enjoyed the company of many positive-minded teachers in Western Australia. Manako was grateful to her colleagues who helped her with her school work and she acknowledged that their efforts made her life easier. On one occasion, Leyla was approached by a parent who wanted her help in improving his Mathematics skills in preparation for attending a professional learning program. After Leyla helped the parent concerned, he showed his gratefulness by showering her with thankful messages and gifts, which meant a considerable amount to Leyla. Another parent called Leyla to inform her that her child had been very happy in her class for three consecutive years and that as a parent, she did not want a change of teacher for the final years of her child's schooling. All these acknowledgements compensated for Leyla's challenging times at school. Leyla learnt much through her challenging experiences. Her observation was "The toughest schools were the training grounds for the best teachers." This comment was similar to a comment made by Anne, where she observed "The toughest schools were the best managed schools." As of 2015, ten out of the twelve participants in the two states of Western Australia and South Australia, have managed to remain in the teaching profession. This data implies that irrespective of multiple challenges, teaching in Australian public secondary school has its own rewards for overseas trained teachers.

#### **4.3.6 Summary**

This section presented data on the experiences of participants after receiving a teaching position in a public secondary school of Western Australia and South Australia. Participants identified four general concerns along with particular positive observations. Even though some participants received in-school support, many others did not. Participants perceived dissonance in pedagogy and student attitude towards education. Student behaviour management was a concerning issue and some participants also believed that they had experienced workplace harassment and discrimination. In spite of multiple negative experiences, participants reported many

positive experiences, which helped the majority of them remain in their teaching positions and be reasonably contented.

#### 4.4 Specific Research Question 3

*How do overseas trained teachers' cultural values and perspectives affect their adjustment processes to the public secondary schools of Western Australia and South Australia?*

This section presents data to illustrate the influence of culture on the adaptation process of overseas trained teachers to the public secondary schools of Western Australia and South Australia. Figure 4.1 shows flags on a world map, that indicate the home countries of the participants of this research.



Figure 4.1 *Flags in the world map showing home countries of the participant overseas trained teachers.*

As shown in the Figure 4.1, the twelve participants in this research came from twelve different countries. The self-identities of the participants were shaped by their country specific values, perspectives and beliefs. The experiences of the participants



in the Australian public secondary schools also varied accordingly. The data presented in this section are divided into three sub-sections. The sub-sections are shown in table 4.3

Table 4.3

*Effects of culture on the adaptation process of overseas trained teachers to the public secondary school of Western Australia and South Australia*

<b>4.4.1 Effects of culture shock on the adaptation process of overseas trained teachers to the Australian public secondary schools</b>
<b>4.4.2 Experiences of overseas trained teachers from culturally and linguistically diverse and non-English speaking background (CALD/NESB)</b>
<b>4.4.3 Experiences of overseas trained teachers from native English speaking Background (NEST)</b>

#### *4.4.1 Effects of culture shock in the adaptation process of overseas trained teachers in Australian public secondary schools*

The data presented in this sub-section are divided into two categories: experiences of challenges due to culture shock; and ease of adaptation of NEST participants to Australian secondary public schools due to cultural familiarity.

##### *4.4.1.1 Experiences of challenges due to culture shock*

Participants reported different levels of 'culture shock' when they faced Australian public secondary schools for the first time. Participants claimed that these experiences of culture shock made their adaptation process to Australian public secondary schools difficult. A majority of the participants had to modify their cultural values and expectations in order to adapt to the Australian public secondary school teaching environment. For example, Leyla, from Iran believed that women should not raise their voices, as it was not acceptable in her Middle East culture.

However, regretfully for Leyla, her voice had changed to a higher pitch and tone as an outcome of her teaching practices in Australia. She recalled that she had to raise her voice in order to manage her classroom. Leyla's comments suggest that even after residing in Australia for almost three decades, she still could not forget her intrinsic cultural values, which gave her such an outlook. Leyla also believed that in Australia, the students received too many readily available resources with little or no effort, as a result of which, they did not learn to accept those facilities with gratitude. In this respect, Lawrence and Barbara also indicated that extra alertness was needed by the teachers to protect public property from being vandalised by the students. In addition, both Leyla and Bob claimed that they expected to teach lessons to students that they might value, but often ended up "baby-sitting" instead, as quite often some students failed to show responsibility in their behaviour. Leyla claimed that students in Australia were given

Too much leniency, independence and information at a very early age, which may not be the right idea for educating kids. They do not value what they have. I have been studying and working hard and that's the message that I am going to pass to my own kids.

Leyla wanted her own children to inherit the values of earnest hard work, despite failing to instill the same in her students.

In many Eastern cultures, teachers hold a position of respect and high regard. Manako came from Japan and in that country, teachers automatically commanded respect and were treated with admiration. As a LOTE teacher in a South Australian public secondary school, she found that aspect was sadly missing. In her own words "well, in Australia people do not respect the teachers so much, but still I am proud of myself being a teacher". Manako's words suggest that intrinsic values and beliefs remain with individuals, even after their environment changes. This participant also felt uneasy to let people in her home with their shoes on, due to the essential "cleanliness" factor in her culture, but eventually she had to make a compromise. Similarly, Bob reflected that even though as a student, he had not liked some of his teachers back in South Africa, yet respect was something that he automatically gave to his teachers, as it was part of his cultural etiquette. Regretfully, he found that aspect lacking in many Australian students.

Bob from South Africa, also recalled that poor students in his native country, walked a considerable distance to reach schools and continued striving even without the basic resources, just to learn and move ahead in their lives. After assessing the education system of Australia and other first world countries to which Bob had travelled, Bob came to the following conclusion "higher the socioeconomic condition of a country, lesser the value of education or strong economy is inversely proportional to the value of education". Bob also observed

The first thing that struck me as odd was the complete lack of engagement in education. You do not have to be educated in order to be wealthy and a lot of students that I taught, all they wanted to do is to get out of school and start earning money. They had no real ambition to learn unless you could link the learning to a tangible, money making reality... you are living in a place where you are judged by the amount of money you earn. Some kids laughed at my salary and said 'my dad makes what you make in 6 months'... there is nothing that you can teach me that my dad can't because my dad makes more money than you.

Bob also indicated that he received his biggest culture shock when he realised that not only the students, but their parents also have the same kind of attitude towards life and education. His observation was "Affluence gives rise to apathy." This difference between expectation and reality gave way to his culture shock. Bob had seen that students back in his home country valued education, but in Australia, he was faced with a situation where he observed

Students have everything, yet value nothing! That's just shocking for me and still is! In my mind I think why would you throw it away? Why would you throw away this opportunity that some kids would literally kill for? My expectations changed.

However, Bob reflected that even though he had suffered an initial culture shock, in his mind, he insisted on considering only the positive side of his experiences in Australia. This attitude may well have helped him to adapt faster to the new school environment and become popular in the school community.

#### *4.4.1.2 Ease of adaptation of NEST participants to Australian public secondary schools due to cultural familiarity*

Familiarity with the Australian culture helped a majority of native English speaking teacher (NEST) participants avoid experiences of culture shock. These

participants had a comparatively smooth transition to Australian public secondary schools. For example, Alice from Canada reported that she did not experience culture shock. Unlike some other participants, the attitude of Australian students towards education did not come as a shock to Alice. She grew up with a similar schooling structure, curriculum and cultural expectations as that of the Australian students. The situation in Australia was exactly what Alice "expected it to be". Alice reflected that she grew up in a low socioeconomic area of Toronto, where the students did not have much aspiration for higher education or achievement. Alice observed that all those students wanted to do in life was "to go out there and work". The only disparity between Canadian public schools and Australian public schools that Alice noted was that of school uniforms. In Canada, students wore uniforms only in private schools. Private school students had a code of conduct that they had to adhere to. When Alice initially met her students in uniform, she thought that her students' behaviour and courtesy would match those of private school students back in Canada. However, she soon realised otherwise. Alice could adapt easily to her changed environment and moved ahead quite naturally with her day-to-day school schedules. She succeeded in becoming the Coordinator of Year 10 within the first two years of her service in a public secondary school of Western Australia. Anne from the United Kingdom claimed to have worked in challenging inner city schools in London and she implied that she did not experience much culture shock either. Barbara from Ireland, however, was shocked by the Australian education "system" which she believed failed to support teachers in issues of registration, teacher orientation and curriculum management.

#### *4.4.2 Experiences of participants from culturally and linguistically diverse and non-English speaking background (CALD/NESB)*

The data presented in this sub-section are divided into two categories: summary of participants' experiences from culturally and linguistically diverse and non-English speaking background (CALD/NESB); and synopsis of CALD/NESB participants' experiences and their perspectives.

#### 4.4.2.1 Summary of participants' experiences from culturally and linguistically diverse and non-English speaking background (CALD/NESB)

The data indicated that participants from culturally and linguistically diverse and non-English speaking background faced multiple challenges in adapting to the public secondary schools of Western Australia and South Australia. There were eight participants in this research who came from culturally and linguistically diverse and non-English speaking backgrounds: Ali, Leyla, Steven, Manako, Nadjuhin, Rumi, Hayat and Lawrence. Table 4.4 illustrates a summary of their experiences.

Table 4.4

*Experiences of participants from culturally and linguistically diverse and non-English speaking background (CALD/NESB)*

<b>Names</b>	<b>Orienta -tion</b>	<b>Pedagogical dissonance</b>	<b>Student behaviour issues</b>	<b>Culture shock</b>	<b>Workplace harassment and discrimination</b>
<b>1.Ali (Iraq)</b>	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>2. Leyla (Iran)</b>	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>3. Steven (Zimbabwe)</b>	No	No	No	No	No
<b>4.Manako (Japan)</b>	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
<b>5.Nadjuhin (Ukraine)</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
<b>6.Rumi (India)</b>	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>7.Hayat (Eritrea)</b>	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
<b>8. Lawrence (Seychelles)</b>	No	No	Yes	Yes	No

Table 4.4 illustrates that out of the eight participants from a culturally and linguistically diverse and non-English speaking background, seven reported that they

did not receive proper teacher orientation. With the exception of one, all these participants claimed to have experienced pedagogical dissonance, student behaviour issues and culture shock. Three of these participants experienced workplace harassment and discrimination. Table 4.4 suggests that most participants from culturally and linguistically diverse and non-English speaking background experienced common challenges, while trying to adapt to the public secondary schools of Western Australia and South Australia.

#### *4.4.2.2 Synopsis of CALD/NESB participants' experiences and their perspectives*

A majority of the CALD/NESB participants believed that they were left on their own to learn about their roles and responsibilities, with little or no school-based support or mentoring program in place. Steven from Zimbabwe, had previous experience of teaching in London schools and believed that the British system of teacher induction was "one of the best of its kind". He was surprised at the lack of an orientation program in Australia. Nadjuhin was the only participant in this group of teachers who attended an alternative, fee paying teacher induction program at Murdoch University in Western Australia. Accordingly, only Steven and Nadjuhin were equipped beforehand with some knowledge of expected circumstances in Australian public secondary schools.

Most participants, especially those from culturally and linguistically diverse and non-English speaking background, thought that some Australian students in public secondary schools did not value education. The participants believed that the reason behind this attitude of the students was the conception that education was not necessary to lead a good lifestyle in Australia. Three participants (Leyla, Nadjuhin, Hayat) thought that the Australian students received too many privileges too quickly and that, the students did not appreciate the opportunities that were extended to them. These participants believed that Australian students took too much for granted.

A majority of the participants felt that there was a general lack of student interest towards their learning. The participants also reflected that the students believed in the validity and usefulness of lessons, only if the lessons could be connected to the students' immediate lives and surroundings. Students regarded everything else to be unnecessary, unimportant and a time wasting activity. An example of this observation came from Manako of Japan. Manako indicated that she tried to do her best to generate student interest in Japanese language. She asked her students to buy some books and stationery for comprehending the basics of Japanese language. However, Manako noticed that many students and their parents did not want to invest in those items, as they thought that learning Japanese was an extreme waste of time and resources. Without the basic books and resources at hand, this LOTE teacher in South Australia found it challenging to deliver any structured lesson that she had planned for her students.

A majority of CALD/NESB participants reported that they could not condone the careless attitude of students towards their education. Both Ali and Leyla found the attitude of Australian students towards education quite negative. Rumi reflected that back in India, students strived to achieve their best academic outcome, as education was connected to future betterment and prosperity. She observed that in contrast, Australian students can take up any job to support a decent lifestyle and did not have to excel in academic achievement in order to achieve a rewarding career. She thought that students in Western Australia refused to engage in academics as their future careers did not depend on it. In addition, Nadjuhin also expressed her surprise at the students' attitude towards their educational outcomes, as she herself struggled to achieve excellence in academics while starving in the midst of extreme poverty in the Ukraine. She remembered surviving on oats and a little butter and investing the rest of her pocket money on books. Hayat had to leave his native country Eritrea to study in Egypt, due to Eritrea's unstable political situation. Hayat recalled that the Department of Education in Egypt was called Department of Discipline and Education, to remind students that discipline always preceded education. Hayat had to compromise his cultural expectations and perspectives, in order to teach in a public secondary school of Western Australia.

CALD/NESB participants had varied collegial experiences in their workplaces. While some participants (Ali, Leyla, and Rumi) had experiences of apparent workplace harassment and discrimination, others, like Manako, Steven and Hayat received help and support from numerous colleagues and did not report any such experience. Nadjuhin excelled in her career in spite of differences in her accent, pedagogical approach, beliefs and perspectives. She was determined to succeed and was prepared to learn on the job. As she stated "fake it till you make it". Nadjuhin continuously changed jobs and positions to maintain her Level 3 stature at school. She commanded respect from staff and was successful in most of her undertakings, even in the midst of very challenging circumstances. Overall, irrespective of minor variations, cultural adaptations to Australian public secondary schools were difficult and time-consuming for the majority of the CALD/NESB participants.

#### *4.4.3 Experiences of participants from English speaking background (NEST)*

The data in this sub-section are divided into two categories: summary of participants' experiences from native English speaking backgrounds (NEST); and synopsis of the NEST participants' experiences and their professional success.

##### *4.4.3.1 Summary of participants' experiences from native English speaking background (NEST)*

Participants from a native English speaking background (NEST) faced fewer challenges in comparison to their counterparts from CALD/NESB, while adapting to the public secondary schools of Western Australia and South Australia. The four native English speaking participants in this research were Alice, Barbara, Bob and Anne. Table 4.5 provides a summary of their experiences in the public secondary schools of Western Australia and South Australia.



Table 4.5

*Experiences of participants from English speaking background (NEST)*

<b>Names</b>	<b>Teacher orientation</b>	<b>Pedagogical dissonance</b>	<b>Student behaviour issues</b>	<b>Culture shock</b>	<b>Workplace harassment and discrimination</b>
<b>1. Alice (Canada)</b>	Yes	No	No	No	No
<b>2. Barbara (Ireland)</b>	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
<b>3. Bob (South Africa)</b>	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
<b>4. Anne (England)</b>	Yes	No	No	No	No

Table 4.5 highlights that two participants from a native English speaking background received teacher orientation, while two did not. Barbara and Bob, who did not have the opportunity to attend a teacher orientation, experienced pedagogical dissonance, student behaviour issues and culture shock. It is interesting to note that Alice and Anne, who received proper teacher orientation, did not go through such experiences. None of these participants from native English speaking background experienced harassment or discrimination in their school community.

#### *4.4.3.2 Synopsis of NEST participants' experiences and their professional success*

The NEST participants faced fewer challenges in adapting to Australian secondary public school in comparison to the CALD/NESB participants. Two of the NEST participants, Barbara and Bob reported that they did not receive a teacher orientation and had experienced initial pedagogical dissonance and student behaviour issues. Barbara claimed that her native country Ireland had a very structured education system and that she was surprised at the lack of organisation in the education system of South Australia. Bob was brought up in South Africa during apartheid and reflected that initially, he found the attitude of the Australian students shocking. Alice and Anne received teacher orientation and did not report experiences

of pedagogical dissonance or student behaviour issues. Alice reflected that she was not surprised by the attitudes of students in Western Australia. Anne, with her experience in tough inner city schools of London, seemingly adapted well to public secondary schools of Western Australia. None of these NEST participants reported any experience of workplace harassment or discrimination.

These NEST participants were generally successful in their professional careers in Australia. In spite of initial difficulties, Barbara continued in her Level 3 leadership position (HOLA of Science). In spite of differences in values, Bob achieved Level 3 classroom teacher status through a successful application process and was very popular both amongst students and other members of staff, for his lively and positive attitude. Alice had a distinct North American accent, but neither students nor staff ridiculed her. Alice was liked and respected by the school community. She became Year 10 coordinator in the first two years of her service. Anne served as acting Deputy Principal in a remote school of Western Australia and is currently (as of 2015) serving as Associate Dean of English at her current school. She voluntarily took on the mentoring responsibility of young graduate teachers at her Department and from the feedback that was received from her mentees, was excellent in her role.

#### **4.4.4 Summary**

This section presented results on the effects of cultural attributes on the adaptation process of participants to the public secondary schools of Western Australia and South Australia. The data indicated that participants from culturally and linguistically diverse and non-English speaking background (CALD/NESB) experienced more culture shock, pedagogical dissonance, behaviour management issues and workplace harassment and discrimination in comparison to their native English speaking (NEST) counterparts. NEST Participants from faced fewer challenges in their cultural adaptation to the public secondary schools of Western Australia and South Australia and were professionally more successful in comparison to their counterparts from CALD/NESB.

## **4.5 Conclusion**

In this chapter the results on the three research questions were presented in three sections: experiences of overseas trained teachers prior to obtaining a teaching position in a public secondary school of Western Australia and South Australia; experiences of overseas trained teachers after obtaining a teaching position in a public secondary school of Western Australia and South Australia; and effects of culture on the adaptation process of overseas trained teachers to the secondary public secondary schools of Western Australia and South Australia. Chapter 5 presents a discussion and analysis of the results.

## Chapter Five: Discussion of Results

### 5.1 Introduction

This study explored the contextual experiences of overseas trained teachers before and after obtaining a teaching position in a public secondary school of Western Australia and South Australia, in reference to their cultural perspectives. The discussion of the results is divided into three sections based on the three research questions

1. What are the contextual experiences of overseas trained teachers prior to obtaining a teaching position in a public secondary school of Western Australia and South Australia?
2. What are the contextual experiences of overseas trained teachers after obtaining a teaching position in a public secondary school of Western Australia and South Australia?
3. How do overseas trained teachers' cultural values and perspectives affect their adjustment processes to the public secondary schools of Western Australia and South Australia?

The aim of this chapter is to discuss the qualitative results gathered through in-depth, semi-structured interviews and field notes in reference to the review of literature presented in Chapter Two. Table 5.1 outlines the structure of Chapter Five.

Table 5.1

*Outline of Chapter Five: Discussion of Results*

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**5.2 Contextual experiences of overseas trained teachers before obtaining a teaching position in a public secondary school.**

**5.3 Summary**

**5.4 Contextual experiences of overseas trained teachers after obtaining a teaching position in a public secondary school.**

**5.5 Summary**

**5.6 Effects of culture on the adaptation process of overseas trained teachers to**

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the public secondary schools of Western Australia and South Australia.

## 5.7 Summary

## 5.8 Summary of discussion on overall results

## 5.9 Conclusion

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### **5.2 Contextual experiences of overseas trained teachers before obtaining a teaching position in a public secondary school**

This section considers the results on the experiences of participants before obtaining a teaching position in a public secondary school of Western Australia and South Australia. The discussion of the results in this section is divided into four subsections: perceived lack of in-depth information on post immigration life in Australia; teacher registration and English language requirements in the states of Western Australia and South Australia; lifestyle changes and relocation for obtaining permanency with the Education Department; and the teacher orientation process. These four subsections will now be explored in the light of the literature on contextual experiences of overseas trained teachers before obtaining a teaching position in a public secondary school.

#### *5.2.1 Perceived lack of in-depth information on post immigration life in Australia*

The participants identified three main concerns in the area of perceived lack of in-depth information on post immigration life in Australia. These identified areas of concern are: perceived lack of information on everyday life in Australia; apparent inadequacy of online information on registration and resources; and the observed danger of misinformation about teaching locations. Participants expressed unhappiness with the quality of information that they received on post-immigration life in Australia. For example, one of the participants (Barbara) claimed that she was unaware of the obligation of a tax return for Australian residents. She suggested that an information pack with details of all entitlements should be provided to overseas trained teachers as soon as they migrate to Australia. Back in 1999, Bella recommended to the Board of Teacher Registration of Queensland to develop an

information kit for overseas trained teachers, which might include all required information on the details of the duties and responsibilities of teachers and avenues of available support. The same suggestions came from this participant (Barbara), who thought that such an information pack might indeed be of significant assistance to overseas trained teachers trying to establish themselves personally and professionally in a foreign country. In this context, Barbara implied that the modus operandi of "the system" in the Education Department of South Australia needed "a big change". Furthermore, a similar observation is echoed in the observations of Manik (2007) in the United Kingdom. Manik (2007) reported that South African teachers in the United Kingdom did not obtain any information from their recruiting websites on general factors that affected their everyday lives. As a solution to these challenges, the final 'Globalisation and Teacher Movements' research report (Reid, Collins & Singh, 2010) suggested provisions for extending personalised connections and support to address any personal and professional problems that overseas trained teachers might have particularly during their first six months in Australia.

Participants' testimony indicated an apparent inadequacy of online information regarding registration and resources. For example, a participant from South Australia (Manako) claimed that she could not find information on the prerequisites for becoming a teacher from the available sources. Consequently, Manako had to ascertain all the required information on her own. Another participant, Anne recalled that she was barred from navigating the Education Department website of Western Australia when she wanted information on the curriculum, as she did not possess a teacher registration number at that point of time. These experiences of the participants align with observations made by Reid and Collins (2012). The authors also observed that many overseas trained teachers claimed that they did not have access to all the facts, processes, procedures for overseas qualification recognition and registration and were burdened with unnecessary "red tape" (p. 49) and institutional hurdles that lay before them prior to their arrival in Australia (Reid & Collins, 2012).

One of the participants (Bob) expressed his concern that overseas trained teachers could become unfortunate victims of misinformation regarding teaching locations. Bob described how people might take advantage of unsuspecting overseas trained teachers' lack of local knowledge. Citing an example of another overseas trained teacher whom he knew, the participant explained that as a result of misinformation, overseas teachers might find themselves accepting teaching positions in locations, unsuitable to their personal health and wellbeing. In addition, a majority of the participants claimed that the Education Department websites of the two states of Western Australia and South Australia did not inform them of the contextual reality of circumstances in rural and remote regions in these states. These participants' perceptions are also reflected in the observations of Reid and Collins (2012). These authors noted that misinformation was a significant problem for overseas trained teachers. Furthermore, the final 'Globalisation and Teacher Movements' research report (Reid, Collins & Singh, 2010) advocated the creation of increasing transparencies in the migration policies and encouraged overseas trained teachers to understand the realities of working in Australia. As a solution to possible decisions taken due to misinformation or lack of information, Jhagroo (2004) as quoted in Biggs (2010), recommended that overseas trained teachers should visit the proposed country of immigration at least once beforehand. This exercise might assist the migrating overseas trained teachers to procure an impression of the people and the country in general before making an informed decision on migration. However, the practical applicability of this recommendation might vary according to various contexts. For example, I have visited Australia before migration to get a feel of the country and also managed to acquire an impression of the prevailing culture. But in spite of this fact, I was unable to comprehend the realities of teaching in an Australian public secondary school till I commenced teaching in Western Australia.

#### *5.2.2 Teacher registration and English language requirements in the states of Western Australia and South Australia*

Four participants expressed their concern about the different teacher registration policies and English language requirements of the states and territories of Australia. The participants' main concerns were: anomalies in the teacher registration process in the states of Western Australia and South Australia;

registration red tape and the need to replicate paperwork; and different English language testing policies for teacher registration in the states of Western Australia and South Australia. Participants highlighted that anomalies in the registration process of the different states of Australia caused them a sense of uncertainty. For example, Rumi migrated from New South Wales to Western Australia with her husband (who was also a teacher) and expressed surprise at the differences in the teacher registration policies of the two states. Reid, Collins and Singh (2010) recorded similar differences in overseas teachers' experiences pertaining to teacher registration policies. These authors noted that each Australian state and territory had its own teacher recruitment policies as a result of which there was an emergence of "labour market failure"(Reid, Collins & Singh, 2010, p. 9) which in turn impeded the ease by which overseas trained teachers entered and taught in Australian schools. In the same context, the 'Globalisation and Teachers movement' research report (Reid, Collins & Singh, 2010) suggested a streamlining process for teacher registration, recruitment and induction processes throughout the states and territories of Australia to improve teacher mobility.

Two of the participants Alice and Barbara, conveyed frustration at the registration delays and the need to resubmit paperwork, which proved to be a time-consuming and expensive process. Alice in Western Australia was asked to rerun an international criminal clearance check for registration purposes which caused a delay in her registration. In addition, she was also not made aware of the fact that staff placement was managed through the Department of Education of Western Australia at the time of her employment (2008). Alice was surprised at the prospect, as in her home country (Canada) after initial registration, teachers had to apply to individual schools for employment. Currently (as of 2015), the Education Department of Western Australia has encouraged Independent Public Schools (IPS) to recruit their own staff in place of Departmental placement.

Barbara, the other participant in South Australia, also had her proposed employment withheld due to red tape caused through the South Australian teacher registration process. Specifically, she had to replicate and renew her certificates in



order to complete her teacher registration. Due to this delay in the teacher registration process, Barbara had to live on her own means. She had to rent a house in a potentially dangerous area and put herself and her family's safety under threat. These results resonate with the observation made by Bella (1999), who observed that overseas trained teachers in Queensland expressed discontent about the 'wait' time and considered registration requirement as one of their greatest hurdles. It would appear that little seems to have changed in some Australian states since then (1999). Internationally, similar challenging experiences of overseas trained teachers due to registration delays and red tapes are also reported in New Zealand (Dewar & Visser, 2000) and Canada (Niyuwahwe et al., 2014).

The English language requirement for teacher registration also varied according to the registration policies of the two states of Western Australia and South Australia. While none of the participants from Western Australia had to prove their capabilities in English other than achieving the desirable bands in the International English Language Testing System (IELTS), or the Professional English Assessment for Teachers (PEAT), participants from South Australia had different experiences in that regard. In South Australia, English language assessment forms part of the teacher registration process at the discretion of the Teacher Registration Board of South Australia (TRBSA). Barbara, who was a native speaker, also had to prove her capability in English before obtaining her teacher registration in South Australia. Another participant from South Australia, Manako, who wanted employment as a teacher of Languages Other Than English (LOTE), had to study English for a year to complete her Australian Second Language Proficiency Rating (ASLPR) requirement, before becoming registered as a teacher in the state. In this regard Bella (1999), encouraged the Queensland state government to consider providing English language programs for overseas teachers at an advanced level. Such courses might be of immense benefit for overseas trained teachers in a similar position as that of Manako.

Furthermore, the results imply that the English language requirement in South Australia might cause delay-related distress to overseas trained teachers. Participants

from South Australia (Barbara, Manako and Steven) were required to meet the English language requirement of the state to become registered as teachers and two of them (Barbara & Manako) expressed their frustration about the delay. Similar observations are reported by Murray et al., (2012), in their study on experiences of overseas trained teachers' experiences in New South Wales. These authors recorded that the English language assessment can be very lengthy and stressful for overseas trained teachers.

Comparing the two states of Western Australia and South Australia, the former seems to have a faster registration process in comparison to the latter. As was discussed earlier, in South Australia, overseas trained teachers may have to appear for an additional English language test according to the discretion of the Teacher Registration Board of South Australia (TRBSA). As of 2015, the Teacher Registration Board of Western Australia (TRBWA) accepts desirable scores either in International English Language Testing System (IELTS) which might often be part of the immigration process itself, or the Professional English Assessment for Teachers (PEAT). A possible reason behind this difference in policy might be the necessity for the Western Australian Education Department to meet the needs of the Difficult-to-Staff (DTS) schools in the rural and remote regions of its vast territory. Nevertheless, taking into consideration the experiences of participants, it appears that as of 2015, obtaining teacher registration for overseas trained teachers in Western Australia might be faster, in comparison to South Australia

### *5.2.3 Lifestyle changes and relocation for obtaining permanency with the Education Department*

A majority of the participants had to accept country positions in order to start their professional careers in Western Australia and South Australia. Even though Western Australia offered permanency for country teaching, no such privilege was offered to participants from South Australia. The three main issues that the participants had to confront in the country locations were: absence of permanent teaching positions in South Australia (even in country locations); loneliness and forced separation from families; and perceived scarcity of basic resources in remote

areas of the country. However, in spite of challenges, one participant experienced positive outcomes during his time in a remote location of Western Australia.

The Department of Education in Western Australia offered teachers permanency in exchange for country or remote services. Seven out of the eight participants who taught in the country and remote regions were from Western Australia. As Reid and Collins (2012) observed, due to ongoing teacher shortages in the rural and remote regions of Australia, many overseas trained teachers feel the need to accept these readily available teaching positions to start their professional careers in Australia. All participants in this study who taught in the remote or rural regions of Western Australia, achieved permanency with the Education department. This observation coincides with the one made by Lonsdale and Ingvarson (2003), where it was noted that Western Australia provided incentives in the form of job permanency, along with financial gains for teachers (both local and overseas trained), if they opted for country teaching. Lonsdale and Ingvarson (2003) also observed that most overseas trained teachers accepted country positions in Western Australia as they found the offer of the Education Department very helpful, at least during the initial years of their settlement in the country.

However, results from the current study illustrate that offers of permanent positions were rare in South Australia, irrespective of the teaching locations in the state. Participants from South Australia reported experiences of deep tension, as they were unsure of the tenure of their teaching positions. The participants from South Australia claimed that they were unable to make a long term personal commitment (such as taking on mortgages) on the basis of their fixed term teaching contracts. Comparative data from participants in the two states of Western Australia and South Australia indicate that in both states overseas trained teachers might have to accept teaching positions in rural and remote locations, at least in the initial stages of their careers, but offers of permanency were only granted to teachers in Western Australia. It might be relevant to mention, however, that currently (as of 2015), offers of permanent teaching positions are diminishing in Western Australia as well.

Experiences of three participants (Hayat, Nadjuhin and Barbara) indicate that acceptance of country teaching positions can result in many personal challenges for overseas trained teachers. Loneliness and forced separation from family compelled at least one participant from Western Australia, Hayat to resign from his position and change his profession for the sake of the well being of his family. These results suggest that relocation and forceful separation from family, friends and acquaintances often create a negative impact on overseas trained teachers. Furthermore, in order to establish her permanent teaching career with the Department of Education in Western Australia, a female participant, Nadjuhin had to teach at various remote locations in order to continue in a Level 3 position. She had to leave her spouse in Perth, resulting in a forced family separation. Vandeyar et al., (2014) reported similar experiences of immigrant teachers in South Africa. These authors observed that in South Africa many Zimbabwean teachers had to face forced separation from their families due to the South Africa's selective policy on permits (compulsory documentation to teach in South Africa). In some situations the husbands received permits, but the wives did not. Such situations caused immense stress and tension in these teachers' professional and personal lives.

Participants (Barbara & Nadjuhin) also reported that remoteness and unavailability of basic facilities had caused a degree of stress. Unavailability of natural resources like clean drinking water caused Barbara to become ill. Nadjuhin could not find an accommodation of her own while working for a school in a remote location of Western Australia and had to share that of the Deputy Principal. She also had to follow the strict dress and etiquette code of the indigenous community in the region. Nadjuhin recalled feeling uncomfortable as she was not accustomed to such rules and remembered keenly awaiting to return to Perth. From the results it appears that overseas trained teachers might struggle with the unaccustomed difficult circumstances in rural and remote regions of Australia for a long time, especially, without the support of family and friends. These challenging experiences reported by the participants are also reflected in the observations made by Reid and Collins (2012). These authors noticed that working in regional Australia might increase the culture shock in overseas trained teachers due to differences in culture,

communication, seclusion, isolation and the necessity to deal with extreme climates in some of the locations.

Besides the above mentioned unfavourable illustrations, there was also a positive example of a participant from Western Australia, Bob, who made constructive use of his loneliness and seclusion in his remote teaching location. This participant decided to become involved in the available projects (after hours creative clubs) of the region and contribute positively to the community. This example indicates that personal attitude and disposition towards life can play an important part in an overseas trained teacher's coping mechanism. These results can be compared with those of Elbaz-Luwisch (2004), who observed that whenever overseas trained teachers have tried to create meaningful relationships with students and staff, it assisted them to adapt to the environment and make a place for themselves in the system.

#### *5.2.4 The teacher orientation Process*

The states of Western Australia and South Australia had different teacher orientation processes. Participants identified two main concerns in this area: apparent absence of consistency in the teacher orientation process; and perceived lack of confidence from overseas trained teachers due to the absence of a teacher orientation process. Results also indicated that teacher orientation might well have had an effect on the teachers' performances at schools. In Western Australia, the teacher orientation process for overseas trained teachers went through multiple changes throughout 2000-2015. Three participants (Ali, Leyla & Hayat) who joined the Education Department of Western Australia in the early 2000s did not receive any teacher orientation. In the early 2000s overseas trained teachers were directly sent to their teaching locations after recruitment, without any departmental teacher orientation. One participant from Western Australia (Nadjuhin), who also joined the Education Department at the same time (early 2000s), attended an alternative teacher orientation program conducted by Murdoch University on her own initiative. The other participants did not receive any information in that regard from the Department

of Education of Western Australia. However, two participants from Western Australia, who joined the workforce in 2007-2008 (Alice & Anne), had the opportunity to attend an intense teacher orientation program that was conducted by the Education Department at that time. Currently (as of 2015), the policy for the teacher orientation process has again changed for the Department of Western Australia and is no longer mandatory, but accessed on a voluntary basis. New teachers (both local and overseas trained) can choose to attend the orientation program offered by the Department of Education of Western Australia after paying a fee of \$100. The differences in the quality of participants' reported experiences suggest that the three participants from Western Australia (Nadjuhin, Alice & Anne) who attended the teacher orientation programs may well have an advantage over other participants, who missed such an opportunity.

All three participants from South Australia (Barbara, Manako & Steven) confirmed that they did not receive any teacher orientation from the Department of Education of that state (DCED). The participants believed that the absence of teacher orientation left them unprepared to take on the classroom responsibilities in a new environment. One of the participants (Barbara), who was appointed as a Head of Learning Area (HOLA) of Science, had to take charge not only of her own classes, but of the entire department without proper information or available resources. Without a teacher orientation and appropriate training, she attested to feeling totally unprepared and overwhelmed. Another participant from South Australia (Steven) reflected that he could manage teaching in South Australian schools only because of his previous teacher orientation experience in the United Kingdom, which he believed was "the best of its kind". He expressed his surprise at the lack of a teacher orientation program in South Australia. New teachers (both local and overseas trained) were sent directly to their schools in South Australia after recruitment without any formal orientation process. Teacher orientation in South Australia was generally provided by the individual schools or the Education Department websites. Hudson et al., (2009) observed similar orientation process for new teachers in New South Wales. These authors observed that New South Wales had a system of orientation where induction and support for new teachers (both local and overseas trained), was provided in the form of websites with reference to school-based

induction programs. These programs were developed and implemented at the discretion of school principals. Hudson et al., (2009) also noted that similar induction programs were found in other states, but indicated that there was little or no mention of how these programs might be funded or monitored by the Education Departments of various states and territories.

Results suggested that teacher orientation programs had an effect on the teachers' performances at schools. For example, three participants from Western Australia (Nadjuhin, Alice & Anne) attended the teacher orientation programs offered at the time of their employment. Two of these participants (Alice & Anne) attended programs conducted by the Department of Education of Western Australia and the third (Nadjuhin) attended a teacher orientation program conducted by Murdoch University. All these three participants recalled that those teacher orientation programs informed them about the curriculum and other expectations in the public schools of Western Australia. These three participants from Western Australia who attended those teacher orientation programs, reported that they had benefitted from the information provided during the sessions. Specifically, these three participants (Nadjuhin, Alice & Anne) stated they felt more positive, confident and successful in their teaching careers. These three participants exhibited resilience and all of them achieved leadership positions. In this context, Buetel et al., observed in 2009, that new members of staff (both local and overseas trained) do not have the skills, expertise and knowledge similar to that of other experienced members of staff. An organised, consistent and ongoing support system has to be in place to enhance the prospect for the success of new teachers. This observation of Buetel et al., (2009) might be realised by the implementation of a consistent process of teacher orientation, followed by mentoring and other relevant support system for the new teachers (both local and overseas trained) for at least the first two years of their service.

### 5.3 Summary of contextual experiences of overseas trained teachers before obtaining a teaching position in a public secondary school

Table 5.2 summarises of the contextual experiences of overseas trained teachers prior to obtaining a teaching position in the secondary public schools of Western Australia and South Australia and also indicates the relevance of the results with respect to the Literature.

Table 5.2

*Summary of contextual experiences of overseas trained teachers prior to obtaining a teaching position in a secondary public school of Western Australia and South Australia and thematic relevance to the literature*

Themes	Concerns/Experiences	Reference to review of the literature
<b>Perceived lack of in-depth information on post immigration life in Australia</b>	a) Perceived lack of information on post immigration life in Australia b) Apparent inadequacy of online information and registration and resources c) Observed danger of misinformation on teaching locations	Bella (1999) Manik (2007) Globalisation and Teacher Movement Research Report (Reid, Collins & Singh, 2010) Reid and Collins (2012) Jhagroo (2004) in Biggs (2010)
<b>Teacher registration and English language requirements in the states of Western Australia and South Australia</b>	a) Anomalies in the teacher registration process in Western Australia and South Australia b) Registration red tapes and the need to replicate paperwork c) Different English language requirements for	Reid, Collins and Singh (2010) Globalisation and Teachers' Movement Research Report (Reid, Collins & Singh, 2010) Bella (1999) Dewar and Visser (2000) Niyuwahbe et al., (2014) Murray et al., (2012)



	teacher registration in the states of Western Australia and South Australia.	
<b>Lifestyle changes and relocation for obtaining permanency with the Education Department</b>	a) Absence of permanent teaching positions in South Australia. b) Loneliness and forced separation from families. c) Perceived scarcity of basic resources in remote areas of the country.	Reid and Collins (2012) Lonsdale and Ingvarson (2003) Vandeyar et. al (2014) Elbaz-Luwisch (2004)

#### **5.4 Contextual experiences of overseas trained teachers after obtaining a teaching position in a public secondary school of Western Australia and South Australia**

This section discusses the results on the experiences of participants after obtaining a teaching position in a public secondary school of Western Australia and South Australia. The discussion of the results in this section is divided into five sub-sections: school based induction and on the job mentoring; classroom expectations and pedagogical dissonance; student behaviour management issues; workplace harassment and discrimination; and rewards and acceptance. These five subsections will now be explored in the light of the literature on contextual experiences of overseas trained teachers after obtaining a teaching position in a public secondary school.

##### *5.4.1 School-based induction and on the job mentoring*

School-based induction and on the job mentoring is a crucial component for a successful teaching career (Johnson et al., 2001). Participants highlighted two different experiences in this area: apparent inadequacy in school-based induction; and positive experiences of on-the-job mentoring and collegial support. A majority of the participants claimed that they did not receive a school-based induction before taking on their teaching responsibilities. The results indicate that some schools may

not choose to conduct an effective induction program for new teachers (both local and overseas trained), especially if a teacher joined a school in the middle of an academic year. For example, while one participant (Bob) was only given a blue book containing all the rules and policies for managing behaviour of students in the name of school-based induction, another participant (Barbara) was left to cope on her own without any such resource. Barbara's colleagues and school authorities thought that as an "experienced" teacher, she should be able to find her own information and resources, even if her experience as a teacher was in a different country. Results indicated that in most cases, the participants found themselves alone to survive through the initial stages of their professional careers.

These results might be compared to a similar observation made by Ward et al.,(2001), in reference to the experiences of immigrants in general. Ward et al., (2001) reflected that sojourners or immigrants are generally "left to swim or sink on their own" (p. 16) in a foreign country. Back in 1999, the Queensland government took an initiative by providing a special teacher orientation (induction) program to support overseas trained teachers during the first few years of their teaching. The program included work-shadowing strategies for overseas trained teacher applicants from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds (Implementation of Multicultural Queensland Policy, 1999). This program encompassed many more strategies than what was generally provided in a school-based induction. Support networks for overseas-trained teacher applicants were established to provide assistance with recruitment and selection, communication or language difficulties and behaviour management programs. Such programs, if implemented consistently in all the states and territories of Australia, might form a highly beneficial support structure for overseas trained teachers in the beginning years of their career.

Even though the experiences of the participants indicated that school-based induction programs were not very positive, three participants (Manako, Anne & Bob) mentioned how they were fortunate to receive remarkable collegial support and voluntary mentoring. These participants reported that they found at least one colleague at their schools, who freely extended help when they needed it. Other

participants did not consider themselves quite so fortunate in that regard. It appeared from the results that participants who had the opportunity of obtaining collegial support and mentoring had fewer challenges in adapting to public secondary schools of Western Australia and South Australia. As Peeler and Jane (2005) observed, whenever newcomers could develop relationships with other senior members of staff, they gained an 'insider' (accepted as one of their own) status. These authors noted that gaining such support and acceptance often improved the self-confidence and self-worth of overseas trained teachers, especially during the initial phase of their professional journey. Even though Peeler and Jane (2005) highlighted the importance of mentoring, still as of 2015, public secondary schools did not seem to have a definite policy in place for mentoring new teachers (both local and overseas trained). Commencing a teaching career without appropriate mentoring might be challenging for any teacher, especially one from overseas.

#### *5.4.2 Pedagogical dissonance and unrealistic expectations of teachers from the school administrators*

A majority of the participants outlined that they had to adjust their classroom expectations and pedagogical practice in order to teach in public secondary schools of Western Australia and South Australia. Participants identified two main concerns in this area: pedagogical dissonance; and unrealistic expectations of teachers from the school administration. Six of the eight participants from CALD/NESB cohort (Ali, Leyla, Nadjuhin, Manako, Hayat & Rumi), had issues with adjusting to the pedagogical approach in Australia. These six participants were accustomed to different pedagogical approaches in their native countries. These participants observed that pedagogical practices in their countries relied on following a preset curriculum, based on prescribed text books and examination. The participants further noted that in their countries, promotion of students to the next grade was not mandatory, but reliant on their satisfactory performance in examinations. For these six participants, the sudden liberty to create one's own program, along with the accompanying challenges of finding one's own resources, felt overwhelming. More than a decade ago, Bella (1999) commented on the challenges overseas trained teachers faced in Queensland in relation to different curriculum requirements. She noted that a majority of the overseas trained teachers in Queensland felt that the

flexibility of the curriculum had its own challenges. Moreover, Bella (1999) noted that while a variety of resources were permitted and often used by teachers, sometimes it was difficult to obtain the required resources. She also recorded that overseas trained teachers in her study found very few willing colleagues to share resources.

The above mentioned six CALD/NESB participants accustomed to different pedagogical structure, spoke of initial difficulties in adjusting to the Australian curriculum in public secondary schools. To the wider school community, overseas trained teachers' initial difficulties in adjusting to the Australian curriculum might appear as their ignorance of the curriculum. De Soyza, West and Jones (n.d) noted that such ignorance of curriculum often promoted a prejudiced and a negative attitude towards teachers from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse backgrounds in the school community. In turn, this negative attitude evolved into a self-perpetuating cycle, whereby schools became reluctant to employ overseas trained teachers (De Soyza, West & Jones, n.d). 'The Globalisation and Teacher movement final report' (Reid, Collins & Singh, 2010) suggested a solution to such experiences of pedagogical dissonance of overseas trained teachers in Australian schools. These authors suggested that instead of trying to convert overseas teachers' pedagogical beliefs and practices with prevalent notions of Australian pedagogy, Australian educators should try to practise specialised mentoring of overseas trained teachers in the way of knowledge sharing. Such endeavours might assist overseas trained teachers in faster adaptation to Australian classrooms. As Abramova (2013) suggested equity in a multicultural society could exist only if immigrant teachers felt that their experience and knowledge were respected. It appeared that for the majority of the CALD/NESB participants in this study the changes in the curriculum requirements, pressure of remaining updated with new workload and expectations, together with the lethargic attitude of some students towards education created shock and stress.

Two participants shared that the level of student achievement in some public secondary schools was lower in comparison to those in their native countries. For

example, one participant (Ali) commented on the required standard of student achievement in Western Australia. Being a Mathematics teacher, he could compare the level of achievement of a Year 11 student in Western Australia, to that of a Year 9 student in his country. This comment can be compared to an observation made by Bella (1999), in relation to the experiences of overseas trained teachers in Queensland. The overseas trained teacher participants in Bella's (1999) study felt that the expected level of work in Queensland was lower, compared to a similar year group in their home country. For example, the author noted that the grade expectations in Queensland schools were not similar to those in Canada. The standard of achievement in Queensland was much lower than that in the United States, the former USSR and France. This observation on the standard of Queensland education made more than a decade ago still (as of 2015) seems to agree with a few participants' impression of student achievement standards of public secondary schools of Western Australia and South Australia. The current trend of global competitiveness might necessitate an implementation of fresh pedagogical strategies in Australia. Successful pedagogical strategies might be taken from other high performing countries in the field of education (as of 2015/2016) like South Korea, Japan, Singapore and Hong Kong (MBC Times, 20 Best Education Systems in the world) for raising the level of achievement of the Australian students. Implementation of such successful strategies might ensure global competitiveness for the Australian students and also lessen the gap of pedagogical dissonance for overseas trained teachers.

Two participants (Hayat & Barbara) were surprised and shocked by what they considered the unrealistic expectations of teachers by school administrators. For example, without prior information or consultation, Hayat, a science teacher from Western Australia was asked to take on a "left over" timetable comprising of science, maths and home economics classes. Barbara, who was employed as a HOLA of Science in South Australia recalled feeling shocked and overwhelmed, when she was asked to take on the responsibility of an agriculture class, including the practical management of livestock. Barbara was also expected to plan lessons and teach agriculture, without any prior training, information or support. These examples indicate the unrealistic expectations in these schools. The authorities unfortunately

failed to accept that such expectations were impractical from any teacher and especially, a new teacher from overseas. An article titled 'Monash Uni says teachers quitting in "epidemic proportions," (training.com.au.18, April, 2015), observed that unmanageable workload and unsupportive environment could lead to declining morale of teachers, which in turn might result in their resignation or early retirement. Realistic workload and achievable expectations of all teachers, including those from overseas, might help in their long term retention.

#### *5.4.3 Student Behaviour Management Issues*

Nine participants had issues with managing student classroom behaviour. Participants identified three major areas of concerns: perceived disrespectful attitude of students towards their teachers; an apparent lack of administrative support in resolving student misbehaviour; and insufficient strategies to manage student behavioural issues. Participants, especially those from culturally and linguistically diverse and non-English speaking backgrounds (CALD/NESB), found the attitude of some Australian students towards their teachers quite disrespectful. For instance, one participant (Leyla) reflected that often the students mispronounced her name with an air of arrogance, which she found unacceptable and belittling. It might be relevant to mention in this respect that foreign sounding names not only attracted discriminatory attitudes from the students, but also of the recruiting officials. For example, De Soyza, West and Jones (n.d) observed that in Western Australia selection processes of teaching candidates were sometimes manipulated in favour of teachers with 'non-foreign' sounding names (Anglo-Saxon names in this context). In this regard, Block (2012) also noted that overseas trained teachers (referred to as immigrant teachers in his study) in Canada were frustrated by their applications being continually rejected by the school recruitment authorities. Block (2012) observed that out of desperation to gain an interview, some immigrant teachers in Canada had been even ready to change their names.

Two participants (Barbara & Leyla) implied that on most occasions, the students could escape the consequences for their misbehaviour. These participants

observed that misbehaving students complain against them, whenever they tried to enforce rules of strict work ethics in their classrooms. In addition, another participant observed that students could always get away with little or no work by blaming their poor academic outcomes on their inability to understand the accents of overseas trained teachers. The participants observed that on most occasions, the wider school community tended to believe in these claims. In this regard, Kamler et al., (1998) noted that overseas trained teachers had to bear the brunt of student misbehaviour more than their Australian counterparts. This observation made by Kamler et al., (1998) still seems relevant, given the recent experiences of participants in this research. Barbara commented in this regard that she came across another overseas trained teacher who held a Doctor of Philosophy degree, but who was unable to teach in a public secondary school due to an inability to manage student misbehaviour. Barbara commented that the most important skill of a teacher in a public secondary school is the mastery of behaviour management strategies. Without those skills, it appears that academic degrees and multiple years of teaching experience become useless.

Furthermore, the review of literature suggests that student behaviour management was not only an issue for overseas trained teachers in Australia, but also for overseas teachers working in other countries of the world. For instance, shocking examples of student behaviour towards overseas trained teachers were recorded in the United Kingdom by Maylor et al.,(2006). The authors noted that overseas trained teachers found the issue of uncontrollable student behaviour, the single most difficult barrier in their adjustment process to English public schools. These authors recorded that overseas trained teachers found that students were rude, disrespectful and often violent in their repeated threatening behaviour towards the teachers. Some of these teachers complained that they were sworn at, verbally abused and even spat at by the students. Mayor et al., (2006) observed, moreover, that overseas trained teachers felt that they did not have any power or authority over the students and that the students could simply escape with their misconduct. Further, the authors recorded that some overseas trained teachers believed that the uncontrollable student behaviour had a direct effect on the students' academic outcome (Maylor et al., 2006).

A majority of the participants claimed that they received no support from the school administration if they sought help in managing student misbehaviour. For example, one participant (Rumi) had multiple issues with managing student behaviour in her classroom. She was left to struggle on her own and the school administration did not assist, or support her in any manner. Instead, the school authorities blamed her for the undisciplined attitude of the students in her classroom. Rumi claimed that due to her difficulty in managing difficult classes, she was denied the upper end Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR) and Extension classes and was left with general and lower level classes. This example might be taken as an illustration of the lack of support from the school authorities towards a struggling teacher. Furthermore, it indicates that on the basis of student behaviour management issues, teachers, including those from overseas could be labelled as incompetent.

The consideration of another participant (Lawrence) indicated that managing student misbehaviour was solely a teacher's responsibility. Lawrence's example illustrated that to manage student behaviour, a teacher might have to go to any extent, including using bribery. In an attempt to engage students in his classroom, this participant bought and distributed on a regular basis, movie tickets to the five best performing students. This example might be regarded as an act of desperation by a teacher grasping for innovative strategies to improve classroom behaviour of students. Similar observations of the absence of support from the school authorities towards teachers, especially those from overseas were recorded by De Soyza, West and Jones (n.d). These authors observed that school authorities took a very casual approach when student misbehaviour was targeted against a teacher, especially one from overseas. The authors observed that on most occasions the authorities respond with comments like "students will be students,"(p. 10) or, that they do the same with "locally-trained teachers" (p. 10). De Soyza, West and Jones (n.d) believed that by taking this kind of approach, the school authorities were condoning anti-social behaviour and racism in schools.

Two participants (Anne & Lawrence) believed that that the existing strategies of classroom behaviour management in Western Australia were ineffective. Anne



from the United Kingdom thought that in Western Australia, there were not enough effective strategies to provide consequences to the offending students. She reflected that teachers did not have many strategies left if students did not attend an allocated detention. It could become immensely challenging for a teacher to chase up an absconding student in the midst of multiple other duties. She suggested that a departmental detention approach should be put in place for all schools. Lawrence reflected that even though he had attended a few professional development programs on Behaviour Management and Instructional Strategies (BMIS), he still could not implement the advocated approaches in his classroom. Lawrence recalled that when his mentors came to observe his class, they could not clearly indicate to him any areas of improvement. He also thought that managing student behaviour was not solely an issue for overseas trained teachers. Lawrence remembered that a very experienced Deputy Principal could not last even a week in a remote school of Western Australia, due to unmanageable student behaviour.

The above mentioned example illustrates that student behaviour management might be an issue for all members of staff, including people in the administration, who command more power and authority in comparison to the classroom teachers. This observation of Lawrence can be corroborated by information provided in two different articles (Bad Apple Bullies. Working conditions for Australian teachers, n.d; National–New Zealand Herald, 12 July, 2015). These articles indicated that both teachers and school administrators face the brunt of student misbehaviour on a regular basis. Furthermore, the same observation of the participant suggests that none of the behaviour management strategies were effective enough to deal with the extreme behaviour pattern of students in some locations of the country. Even though managing student behaviour in public secondary schools might be an issue for all members of staff, it might be particularly more challenging for overseas trained teachers, especially if they were unaccustomed to such behaviours beforehand.

#### *5.4.4 Workplace harassment and discrimination*

Three participants (Rumi, Leyla & Ali) believed that they experienced workplace harassment and discrimination in their workplaces. As was discussed previously, a participant from Western Australia (Rumi) claimed to experience difficulty with managing classroom behaviour of students, but she did not receive any help from the administrators, but instead was criticised. Rumi believed that the school authorities doubted her capability to perform as a competent Mathematics teacher. For example, Rumi was told that there were many complaints against her, yet she claimed that none of those complaints were shown to her in writing. As Rumi could not rise above the behaviour management phase, she could barely teach and prove her competence. Rumi also thought that students consistently disregarded her instructions due to her quiet and soft-spoken nature. The students may well have mistaken her "stereotypical Asian politeness" as a sign of her "weakness" (Santoro, 1997, p. 96). Rumi felt that she was consistently harassed both by the students and different school administrators. Finally, she transferred to another school. This finding indicates that teachers (including those from overseas) who might be weak in managing student behaviour, might be harassed to the point of losing their teaching positions in public secondary schools.

In addition to the previous observation, another participant (Leyla) in a remote location of Western Australia came to a painful realisation that she was not welcome by her colleagues at school. For example, Leyla claimed that on one occasion she was blamed of irresponsibility, when someone removed a box full of Maths books from her classroom. On one more occasion, the principal interfered with her classroom instructions resulting in her getting into a power struggle with students. Leyla claimed that she was harassed by some staff members until she found another teaching placement. These two examples indicate that adaptation of overseas trained teachers into a school community is in many ways dependent on collegial acceptance. If a teacher (either local or overseas trained) is isolated, ignored and harassed consistently, then that person will have no other choice, but to leave. These examples could be compared to similar instances of harassment and isolation provided by De Soyza, West and Jones (n.d). These authors noted that life was made

miserable for an overseas trained relief teacher in a rural region of Western Australia, when students hid her belongings and colleagues did not share resources with her. The relief teacher sadly reflected that she had limited opportunity to show her true potential in her employment. Internationally, incidents of racial prejudice and discrimination against overseas trained teachers in the United Kingdom have been reported by Cole and Stuart (2005). The authors noted that some colleagues avoided overseas trained teachers even if they shared the same office. Cole and Stuart (2005) considered this kind of racist behaviour and attitude of the school community as deeply disturbing.

De Soyza, West and Jones (n.d) also noted the example of a very qualified Indonesian teacher in Western Australia who left his teaching position and took up a cleaning job instead, due to unhelpful and rude attitude of his colleagues. Cold, detached and passive segregation from colleagues might create a significant impact on the capacity of overseas trained teachers to continue in their teaching positions. Veiled racism might be the cause behind such attitudes of the wider education community towards overseas trained teachers. Subedi (2008) provided an example of this point. The author observed that an overseas trained teacher in the United States believed that due to her ethnic origin, she was considered to be a less authentic teacher by her students in comparison to her local counterparts. This overseas teacher claimed that her cultural identity, along with her linguistic style influenced the circumstances, which led her to be represented as a less legitimate educator. She commanded less authority and recognition at her school. This observation of Subedi (2008) was reflected in different experiences of at least three participants (Rumi, Leyla & Ali) of this research.

The experience of another participant (Ali) also suggests incidents of incessant harassment at the workplace. Ali from Western Australia claimed to experience difficulties with his HOLA. The HOLA blamed him when his Yr 11 students, who could not do addition correctly, failed to pass Geometry and Calculus. She (the HOLA) placed the blame for the students' failure, squarely on the participant. This participant was of the opinion that he was set apart and harassed, due to his

differences in culture, beliefs and outlook. The participant recalled that in spite of the insistence from the HOLA and other members of staff, he refused to socialise with them and hence the harassment. This example might be compared to an observation made by Santoro (1997), who recorded that an overseas student teacher believed that his success in the workplace depended on his minimising the cultural difference between himself, his students and colleagues. The overseas student teacher in Santoro's (1997) study might have rightfully realised that failing to do so, would risk his general acceptance in the school community. These examples indicate that school communities may not understand and respect diversity within the mainstream culture.

#### *5.4.5 Rewards and acceptance*

All participants agreed that in spite of multiple challenges, teaching in Western Australia and South Australia has its rewards. The two main rewarding experiences that participants reported were: positive aspects of choosing Australia as a teaching destination; and participants' commendations and acknowledgements. The participants acknowledged that Australia has many positive features to offer and making the decision to migrate to this country was one of their best, irrespective of its demands. Participants loved the weather, beaches and the wonderful people in the country.

One participant (Steven), who taught in the United Kingdom before migrating to Australia, thought that the Australian students were much better behaved than those in the United Kingdom. Steven also thought that most of his colleagues were very helpful and co-operative. Another participant (Barbara) believed that Australia had an amazing policy of taxation return, which was unthinkable in other countries. She gratefully acknowledged that Australia has provided opportunities not only for her, but for her entire family. A further participant (Hayat) thought that policies on work-related salary, incentives and holidays in Australia were very humane. Hayat observed that in spite of multiple difficult challenges, the Education Department of Western Australia is trying its best to provide ample educational scope to students

and simultaneously, was also trying to equip teachers with appropriate training facilities. Reid, Collins and Singh (2007) also recorded such rewarding experiences of overseas trained teachers (referred to as immigrant teachers in their study). The authors noted that most immigrant teachers remained satisfied with their experiences in Australian schools, even though a small minority remained unhappy. Reid, Collins and Singh (2007) also observed that immigrant teachers would recommend Australia as a teaching destination. The authors believed that such recommendation was a strong endorsement of the Australian immigrant teacher program (Reid, Collins & Singh, 2007).

In spite of some unfortunate incidents of harassment and discrimination, a majority of the participants reported congenial relationships with some colleagues and the broader school community. The various challenges faced by the participants were contrasted with equally desirable and positive experiences. The company of some like-minded, helpful, considerate and compassionate colleagues made life easier and enjoyable for many participants. One participant (Leyla), for example, who had to endure negative experiences with the school authorities, was delighted when some parents came forward and acknowledged her efforts, not only towards the students under her care, but also for her endeavours in helping a parent outside her care of duty. These examples suggest that earnest hard work does bring in its dividends, even though the road to success might be often lengthy, especially for overseas trained teachers. Looking back at her days of struggle at a remote school in Western Australia, Leyla contemplated that some of her previous challenges paved the way for her future successes. Leyla believed that "the toughest schools were the training grounds for the best teachers". Further, a majority of the participants reflected that teaching in Australia had expanded their horizons and had provided them with wide exposure and professional advancement in multiple ways. These participants were of the opinion that Education Departments of the two states of Western Australia and South Australia were quite generous and understanding of the rights and needs of their employees. These observations of the participants can be compared to a similar one made by Reid, Collins and Singh (2007). These authors recorded that most immigrant teachers thought that teaching in Australia had provided them with multiple opportunities for professional and personal growth.

Another positive finding by these authors was that a majority of immigrant teachers in all states planned to continue in their profession in Australia (Reid, Collins & Singh, 2007).

All participants claimed to have become better professionals as a result of their teaching experiences in the public secondary schools of Western Australia and South Australia. Back in 1966, Lee (as cited in Miller, 2008) made similar observations. The author recorded that teaching abroad, had provided overseas trained teachers with many positive, professional experiences like: greater awareness of learning disabilities, planning for inclusion, increase in subject knowledge and skills, improvements in professional practice, local knowledge and acculturation. This information provided five decades ago, in relation to overseas trained teachers' experiences in the United Kingdom, still (as of 2015) seems to be relevant and applicable to the recent experiences of the participants of this research.

### **5.5 Summary of contextual experiences of overseas trained teachers after obtaining a teaching position in secondary public schools of Western Australia and South Australia**

Table 5.3 summarises of the contextual experiences of overseas trained teachers after obtaining a teaching position in the secondary public schools of Western Australia and South Australia. This table also indicates the relevance of the results with respect to the Literature.

Table 5.3

*Summary of contextual experiences of overseas trained teachers after obtaining a teaching position in a public school of Western Australia and South Australia and thematic relevance to literature*

Themes	Concerns/Experiences	Reference to the review of literature
<b>School-based induction and on the job mentoring</b>	a) Apparent inadequacy in school-based induction b) Positive experiences of on-the-job mentoring and collegial support	Ward et al., (2001) Implementation of Multicultural Policy (1999) Peeler and Jane (2005)
<b>Pedagogical dissonance and unrealistic expectations of teachers from the school administrators</b>	a) Pedagogical dissonance b) Unrealistic expectations of teachers from school administrators	Bella (1999) De Soyza, West and Jones (n.d) Reid, Collins and Singh (2010) MBC Times 20 Best Education Systems in the World Training.com.au (18, April, 2015)
<b>Student behaviour management issues</b>	a) Perceived disrespectful attitude of students towards their teachers b) Apparent lack of administrative support in resolving student behaviour. c) Insufficient strategies to manage student behaviour issues.	De Soyza, West and Jones (n.d) Block (2012) Kamler et. al (1998) Maylor et al., ( 2006) Bad Apples Bullies. Working conditions for Australian teachers (n.d) National- New Zealand Herald (12 July, 2015)
<b>Workplace harassment and discrimination</b>	a) Workplace harassment and discrimination	Santoro (1997) De Soyza, West and Jones (n.d) Cole and Stuart (2005) Subedi (2008)
<b>Rewards and acceptance</b>	a) Positive aspects of choosing Australia	Reid, Collins and Singh (2007)

	as a teaching destination.	Lee (1966) in Miller (2008)
	b) Participants' commendations and acknowledgements.	

## 5.6 Effects of culture on the adaptation process of overseas trained teachers to the public secondary schools of Western Australia and South Australia

This section discusses the results concerning the effects of culture on the adaptation process of overseas trained teachers to the public secondary schools of Western Australia and South Australia. The discussion of the results in this section is divided into three sub-sections: a perceived culture shock for overseas trained teachers; experiences of overseas trained teachers from a culturally and linguistically diverse and non-English speaking background; and experiences of overseas trained teachers from a native English speaking background. These three subsections will now be explored in the light of the literature on the effects of culture on the adaptation process of overseas trained teachers to the public secondary schools of Western Australia and South Australia.

### 5.6.1 Culture shock on overseas trained teachers

The results suggested that the extent of culture shock experienced by the participants was influenced by the level of their familiarity with Australian culture. Participants illustrated two different experiences in this area: experiences of challenges due to culture shock; and the ease of adaptation of NEST participants to Australian public secondary schools due to cultural familiarity. Participants indicated through their comments that the greater the difference between the Australian culture and their cultures of birth, the greater the shock. As Hofstede (1984) observed that cultural values and beliefs affected both an individual's personal and professional lives and aspirations. In addition, Vandeyar et al., (2014) also argued that there was a profound connection between a person's identity and social practice. These authors noted that self-identity and social practice could be a real-life mirror of each other. Overseas trained teachers experience culture shock due to the contextual pressure of



the wider school communities to make ample adjustments to their personal lifestyles, expectations and outlooks. In this aspect, they often might have to negotiate their core values and beliefs that they grew up with and this necessity might cause a high stress in them. For example, one participant from Iran (Leyla) could not forget her inherent cultural beliefs, even after residing in Australia for many decades. Leyla's voice pitch had changed as a result of her teaching profession in Australia, which she regretted, as women in her culture did not raise their voices. As a teacher, Leyla felt frustrated by some of her students' lack of academic effort. She tried to pass on her values of honest hard work to her students, but on failing to do so, became determined to pass the same to her own children. Change of circumstances may not essentially change one's self-identity. This participant faced challenges to adapt to her new self-identity in Australia.

Another participant (Manako) provided an illustration of how she had to adjust her personal values and expectations in order to adjust to the Australian way of life. In spite of failing to accomplish the desired respect and regard from her students, this Japanese participant was still happy to be a teacher, as in her country teaching was regarded as a highly respected and honourable profession. A mention of Bourdieu's (1984) observation becomes relevant in this context. Bourdieu (1984) observed that due to "habitus," people continue to act, behave and interpret situations in a certain preconceived way, almost unknowingly, even long after changing their environment and situation. Furthermore, Manako reflected that she used to become upset if anyone walked in her home with shoes on, as "cleanliness" was an essential consideration in her culture. After spending some years in Australia, she made a compromise and welcomed people in her home with their shoes on, simply out of courtesy. These two examples from the two above mentioned participants highlight that the inherent values and beliefs developed during one's upbringing form a person's self-identity and they do not change easily, even after a change of environment. The wider need of adjusting and accommodating to new lifestyle and expectations could cause culture shock and stress in the adaptation process of overseas trained teachers to the Australian public schools.

Personal beliefs are deeply influenced by the political and socioeconomic situation of one's own country of birth. It creates an indelible impression on an individual's personal values and identity. For example, a NEST participant (Bob), who was raised in South Africa during the Apartheid regime watched students struggle with poverty in their everyday lives. Bob was fortunate to attend a private school, but had witnessed other less fortunate students walking significant distances to reach schools just to learn and move ahead in their lives. This participant's culture shock was at its peak when he watched some Australian students throwing away opportunities "that others could kill for". He was shocked even more to know that some Australian students could not respect the privilege of having an education, unless they could tie it to some tangible money-making mechanism. Bob came to the conclusion "higher the socioeconomic condition of a country, lesser the value of education. Or strong economy is inversely proportional to the value of education". Bob also noted that "affluence gives rise to apathy". Bob's comments can be related to a similar observation made by Niyubahwe et al., in 2013, where the authors reflected that in countries where education was not regarded as a human right for all, teachers were respected and viewed as influential people who might have a significant impact on a child's future. However, in first world countries, where education was considered to be an undeniable right for all citizens, a teacher enjoyed no such esteemed status (Niyubahwe et al.,2013).

With the exception of the initial experience of the above mentioned participant (Bob), the culture shock was minimal for the other three NEST participants (Alice, Anne, Barbara) because of their familiarity with the Australian culture. Specifically, familiarity with the Australian culture aided in the NEST participants' reported ease of adaptation to the Australian public secondary schools. For example, the original culture of the two native English speaking participants (Alice & Anne) was quite similar to that of Australia and hence they perceived little or no experience of culture shock. Alice was from Canada and she smoothly adapted to her professional career in Western Australia, as little seemed different to her. The only exception that she mentioned was that of secondary public school students in Australia wearing a uniform. Alice was able to assimilate into the school community with considerable ease. Anne from England did not encounter many surprises either, except for the fact

that she thought that more regulations should to be in place for managing student behaviour. However, a third participant from Ireland, Barbara, was quite shocked by the unrealistic expectations of teachers from school administration and the "education system" in South Australia in general.

In spite of some minor issues, all four NEST participants (Bob, Alice, Anne & Barbara) appeared to have adjusted to teaching in public secondary schools of Australia, thus suggesting that cultural familiarity helps in faster adaptation to a foreign country. These teachers had varied accents, but neither the students, nor the wider school community claimed to have "misunderstood" them, unlike their CALD/NESB counterparts. NEST participants were also readily accepted, appreciated and respected by the school community and all of them succeeded in achieving successful leadership careers. These results can be related to the observation made by Inglis and Philps (1995). The authors noted that the acceptable persona of a "good teacher," (p.xi) in an Australian context was quite clearly that of a native English speaker. This observation made two decades ago, still (as of 2015) seem to be applicable in the Australian context.

#### *5.6.2 Experiences of overseas trained teachers from culturally and linguistically diverse and non-English speaking background*

The results displayed in Table 4.4 of Chapter 4, illustrate that there were common challenges faced by overseas trained teachers from culturally and linguistically diverse and non-English speaking background (CALD/NESB). Most of these participants faced issues pertaining to: lack of teacher orientation; pedagogical dissonance; student behaviour management issues; culture shock; and occasionally even harassment and discrimination in the workplace.

Out of the eight participants in the group, seven did not receive a teacher orientation. Only one participant (Nadjuhin) attended a teacher orientation course, independent of the Department of Education of Western Australia, at her own initiative and expense. Her effort was rewarded as she found herself well prepared to

face contextual challenges. Another participant working in South Australia (Steven) taught in the United Kingdom before migrating to Australia. Steven's previous experiences of teaching in similar circumstances in the United Kingdom had provided him with an added advantage. His confidence as a new overseas trained teacher in Australia was derived from the strategies presented in his orientation program in the United Kingdom. Steven was very happy with the quality of teacher orientation that he received in the United Kingdom and claimed it to be "one of the best" of its kind. He did not face as many challenges as other participants in the CALD/NESB cohort. Steven was surprised at the lack of teacher orientation facilities for new teachers in South Australia. These results illustrate that an effective teacher orientation process might have the potential to prepare overseas trained teachers for future challenges in their workplace. Authors (Biggs, 2010; Michael, 2006) noted that the orientation needs of overseas trained teachers were different from those of beginner teachers. Collectively, these authors suggested that education authorities need to keep this specific difference in mind when implementing policies for teacher orientation. The necessity of implementing an ongoing orientation program for all new teachers might be evident from the results, but as of 2015, the Departments of Education in Western Australia and South Australia have not taken action to make the orientation for new teachers a priority.

A majority of CALD/NESB participants highlighted that they found it immensely difficult to cope with what they considered to be a disrespectful and careless attitude of Australian students towards education. One participant (Rumi) was of the opinion that some students in Australia did not believe that they needed an education to do well in life, as they could afford to lead a good lifestyle without higher education. Another participant (Manako) expressed her surprise when her students refused to bring books and accessories to learn the basics of Japanese language, as some of her students felt that learning Japanese was a time-wasting activity. In addition, three other participants (Ali, Leyla & Nadjuhin) reflected that Australian students were given too many privileges in their lives. Leyla in particular, noted that as a result of the availability of too many material "privileges at a very young age," some students did not value their education. Such displayed attitudes of the students towards their education came as a shock to these four participants. In

this regard, Kato (2001) observed that overseas trained teachers carried with them their own baggage of "culture of learning" (p. 30) which consisted of the overseas teachers' conception of what might constitute a classroom atmosphere of good learning. These subjective conceptions evolved from the teachers' understanding of their own accustomed pedagogical practices. This "culture of learning" of overseas trained teachers could often collide with the "classroom culture" (Kato, 2001, p. 30) of students from another country. "Classroom culture" was defined as the general classroom expectation in a given context (Kato, 2001, p.30). In the same context of pedagogical dissonance, Elbaz-Luwisch (2004) reflected that personal beliefs, attitudes, values and outlook of overseas trained teachers could influence their adaptation process to a different pedagogical system.

Furthermore, a majority of the participants reflected that affluence might have led the students to demand their rights at an early age without developing an adequate sense of responsibility. For example, one participant (Lawrence) reported that he had noticed some students disregarded, disrespected and even vandalised public property. This observation was corroborated by Bella (1999), who recorded that students often wasted or destroyed valuable resources, which were barely available to students in some other countries. Bella (1999) also observed that in order to safeguard public property and assets, vigilance, in the way of watchful monitoring of students was required of the teachers (both local and overseas trained).

Seven out of eight participants in the CALD/NESB cohort expressed serious concerns with student behavioural issues. These participants indicated their frustration at what they believed to be a careless and disrespectful attitude of students towards their education and their teachers. Coming from a different culture and background, these participants could not understand the reason for such displayed attitudes of the students. One participant (Lawrence) described the behaviour of his students as "defiant, rude, lacking respect and totally ignoring instructions". Four participants (Ali, Leyla, Nadjuhin & Hayat) reflected that they personally achieved professional success through academic pursuits and could not comprehend how some students failed to understand the role of education in

enhancing their careers. Similar experiences of overseas trained teachers were recorded by Vandeyar et al., (2014). The authors recorded that some Zimbabwean teachers found student behaviour in South Africa quite unacceptable which demanded a toll on their class time. These teachers described the students in South Africa as lazy, disrespectful and ill-disciplined compared to those in Zimbabwe. It might be interesting to note that a participant of this research from South Africa thought that students from his country were much more committed to their academic outcomes than the students in Australia. From these results it would appear that irrespective of the location, behaviour management for overseas trained teachers in a foreign country might always seem to be more challenging in comparison to one's own country. A possible reason for this challenging experience of overseas trained teachers might be the difference in cultural expectations.

Three participants in the CALD/ NESB cohort (Rumi, Leyla & Ali) unfortunately felt that they experienced harassment and discrimination in their workplace. For example, one participant (Rumi) claimed that she did not receive administrative support when she needed it most, as she believed that the school community had already formed a preconceived opinion against her capability to perform as an efficient Mathematics teacher. Another participant (Leyla) felt that she was unfairly blamed for students' poor outcomes and one more participant (Ali) thought that he was harassed as he was culturally different and chose not to socialise after hours. These experiences created a significant stress in these participants. The possible reasons for such discrimination might be found in observations made by Block (2012) in Canada. He noted that immigrant teachers in Canada were placed in socially constructed categories which portray them as outsiders, foreigners, strangers or the Other in society (Block, 2012). On the same note, Niyubahwe et al., (2013) also observed that often immigrant teachers held positions of inferior status to their white colleagues. In addition, Vandeyar et al., (2014) argued that "societal and institutional structures labelled and projected immigrant teachers as outsiders operating outside the mainstream"(p. 15). All these observations made by international researchers (Block, 2012; Niyuwahbe et al., 2013; Vandeyar et al., 2014) might be reflected in some of the experiences of the CALD/NESB participants in the study.

However, five other participants in the CALD/NESB cohort (Nadjuhin, Lawrence, Steven, Manako, Hayat) had positive experiences where they did not experience any harassment or discrimination in their workplace. These five participants in the CALD/NESB cohort expressed how they were fortunate to receive collegial help during their initial years of teaching in public secondary schools. Collegial support improved the quality of these teachers' experiences immensely. As Shah (2012) commented "teacher collegiality plays a vital role in augmenting teacher professional growth and development, job satisfaction, organizational and professional commitment as well as school quality and student performance" (p. 1242). Shah (2012) also observed that the process of collegiality might only work when a significant number of teachers at schools start to appreciate that such efforts might potentially lead to an improved teaching and learning environment.

One participant (Nadjuhin) stood out in the CALD/NESB cohort as she was the only one in the group to achieve multiple leadership positions. This participant had a different accent, pedagogical training, cultural approach and life experience from that of her Australian counterparts, but she still excelled in her career from the very beginning. She faced multiple challenges, but was able to successfully overcome them. She continued in her different Level 3 leadership positions and managed to succeed in them. Another participant in the NEST cohort also experienced similar positive outcomes due to his constructive approach to life. These results suggest that in spite of all disparities and challenges, an individual's personality, attitude, personal disposition and motivation can determine the level of achievement in any given situation. Culture plays a very important role in shaping human experience, but the personal attitude towards life is one of the key determiners of success.

All but one participant (Steven) in the cohort of CALD/NESB teachers described experiencing significant challenges in adapting to the Australian public secondary school sector. Steven from South Australia, taught in the United Kingdom before migrating to Australia and was thus well aware of the expectations in a public secondary school. The challenges for other participants in the CALD/NESB cohort might have been caused due to the inherent differences in their pedagogical beliefs,

culture, values, expectations, dispositions and personal perspectives towards life. In spite of some variation, the larger part of the results indicated that a lack of cultural familiarity could increase the challenges faced by overseas trained teachers working in public secondary schools of Western Australia and South Australia. The professed experiences of a majority of the participants indicated that the possession of different cultural values and perspectives had a high impact on the CALD/NESB cohort and created challenges in their adaptation process to public secondary schools in Western Australia and South Australia.

### *5.6.3 Experiences of participants from English speaking backgrounds (NEST)*

The results displayed in Table 4.5 in Chapter 4, illustrate that the four NEST participants (Alice, Anne, Barbara & Bob) exhibited quite diverse experiences. Two participants (Alice & Anne) received teacher orientation organised by the Department of Education in Western Australia and the other two (Barbara & Bob) did not. It appeared that as a result of the opportunity of attending teacher orientation, or not being offered an orientation course, these participants' experiences in the public secondary schools also differed. As was displayed in Table 4.5 of Chapter 4, Alice and Anne, who attended a teacher orientation course, did not experience pedagogical dissonance, student behaviour management issues and culture shock in the same degree as those who did not attend teacher orientation. These differences of experience indicate that teacher orientation may be one of the significant factors that influence the successful adaptation of overseas trained teachers to Australian public secondary schools. None of the NEST participants could recall experiencing any discrimination in the workplace.

Two NEST participants (Barbara & Bob) experienced pedagogical dissonance, student behaviour issues and culture shock in the public secondary schools of South Australia and Western Australia. Barbara, who taught in South Australia was brought up in an organised educational structure in Ireland. She was shocked when she had to take on the responsibility of teaching subject areas beyond her expertise. She was not aware of the fact that in Australia, teachers were required to teach



multiple subject areas, if necessary. Lack of teacher orientation, information, mentoring, resources and adequate time for adjustment, put this participant under immense stress. Barbara observed that her experience could have been significantly better, if she was made aware of the reality of her teaching environment beforehand. As Kato observed in 2001, it was unjust and unreasonable to put overseas trained teachers directly into the classrooms without proper information or in-service course. The expectation from these 'outsiders' to fit into a system without any strategies and preparation was quite unrealistic (Kato, 2001). Bob from Western Australia experienced pedagogical dissonance, as he could not condone the apparent lethargic attitude of his students towards their education. Even though Bob had a privileged private school upbringing in South Africa, his beliefs and perspectives towards life were shaped by the socioeconomic and political situation of his country during the Apartheid regime. He initially had difficulty in adjusting to his changed expectations in Australia, thus suggesting that cultural values and beliefs have a strong influence in shaping personal experience. However, due to his essential positive nature and outlook, Bob was able to adapt to his changed environment with minimal effort.

A comparison of the results gathered from these two NEST participants (Barbara & Bob) suggests that a range of variables might affect the difference of contextual experiences of overseas trained teachers. The first participant Barbara was a mature aged female shouldering the responsibility of her entire family. This situation increased her stress and added pressure for her to perform in a foreign country for the purpose of a successful settlement. The second participant Bob was a younger male with lesser personal responsibility at the time of his migration, along with a positive attitude. Both the participants experienced pedagogical dissonance, but the adaptation experience of the latter was easier in comparison to the former. Burnett (1998) observed in this respect that there are many variables which affect the adaptability of immigrants in a foreign country. Among those variables are: age, family, marital and reproductive status at the time of migration. All these factors could also affect the settlement experience. The results illustrating the comparative experiences of these two NEST participants identify the same determining factors, which eventually shaped their settlement experiences in Australia.

Even though two of the NEST participants (Barbara & Bob) had initial experiences of culture shock, it did not deter them from achieving professional success. None of the four NEST participants had any experience of harassment and discrimination in their workplace and all four were very successful in their professional careers. As was discussed before, these participants fitted the profile of a "good teacher" (p. xi, Inglis & Philips, 2005). They were also readily accepted in the educational community and did not experience any isolation. Immediate acceptance from students and successful assimilation with colleagues helped these participants to succeed in their professional careers. These results correspond with the observation made by De Soyza, West and Jones (n.d). The authors noted that overseas teachers who seemed most likely to be accepted by the school community, reflected a strong Anglo-Celtic 'norm' in terms of language, accent, dress and overall culture. On the same note, Block (2012) also perceived, that Western societies represent a 'teacher' as white, Christian, young, middle-class, heterosexual and able-bodied. Along with the evidence of the results presented in this study, these observations could explain the reason for the professional success for all the NEST participants. It also needs to be pointed out in this regard, that while all NEST participants appeared to be in advantageous positions, all of them had to prove their capabilities for obtaining leadership positions through successful application processes. Furthermore, their personal qualities, attributes and determination also helped them in achieving their professional goals. As was discussed before, personal disposition, capability and attitude can be significant factors in achieving success in any given situation.

In spite of the minor variations, the results indicated that NEST participants encountered fewer contextual challenges than their counterparts from the CALD/NESB cohort. Cultural familiarity, general understanding of classroom expectations and ready acceptance from students and colleagues made the adaptation process of the NEST participants to Australian public secondary schools much less complicated.

## 5.7 Summary of effects of culture on the adaptation process of overseas trained teachers to the secondary public schools of Western Australia and South Australia

Table 5.4 summarises the effects of culture on the adaptation process of overseas trained teachers to the secondary public schools of Western Australia and South Australia and also indicates the relevance of the results with respect to the Literature.

Table 5.4

*Summary of effects of culture on the adaptation process of overseas trained teachers to the secondary public schools of Western Australia and South Australia and thematic relevance to literature*

Themes	Experiences	Reference to the review of literature
<b>Culture shock on overseas trained teachers</b>	a) Experiences of challenges due to culture shock b) Ease of adaptation of NEST participants to Australian public secondary schools due to cultural familiarity	Hofstede (1984) Vandeyar et al., (2014) Bourdieu (1984) Niyubahwe et al., (2013) Inglis and Philps (1995)
<b>Experiences of overseas trained teachers from culturally and linguistically diverse and non-English speaking background (CALD/NESB)</b>	a) Teacher orientation issues b) Pedagogical dissonance c) Student behaviour management issues d) Culture shock e) Prejudice, discrimination and harassment at workplace	Michael (2006) Biggs (2010) Kato (2001) Elbaz-Luwisch (2004) Bella (1999) Vandeyar et al., (2014) Block (2012) Niyubahwe et al., (2013)
<b>Experiences of overseas trained teachers from native English speaking background (NEST)</b>	a) Teacher orientation issues b) Pedagogical dissonance	Kato (2001) Burnett (1998) Inglis and Philps (1995) De Soyza, West and

c) Student behaviour management issues	Jones (n.d) Block (2012)
d) Culture shock	

## 5.8 Summary of discussion on overall results

The discussion of the results on the experiences of overseas trained teachers in the public secondary schools of Western Australia and South Australia was divided into three main sections in reference to three research questions. The three sections were: contextual experiences of overseas trained teachers before obtaining a teaching position in a public secondary school of Western Australia and South Australia; contextual experiences of overseas trained teachers after obtaining a teaching position in a public secondary school of Western Australia and South Australia; and effects of cultural values on the adaptation process of overseas trained teachers to the public secondary schools of Western Australia and South Australia.

Discussion of results from contextual experiences of overseas trained teachers before obtaining a teaching position in a public secondary school of Western Australia and South Australia was presented under four overarching themes: lack of in-depth information on post immigration life in Australia; teacher registration and English language requirement in the states of Western Australia and South Australia; lifestyle changes and relocation for obtaining permanency with the Education Department; and the teacher orientation process. Participants observed that there might be a need for more clarity and transparency of information on post immigration life in Australia, teacher registration and English language requirements and realistic depiction of some teaching locations in the country and remote regions of the country. Results indicated that country locations might create multiple challenging circumstances for overseas trained teachers. Results also suggested that the implementation of effective teacher orientation courses might have an influence on the positive experiences of overseas trained teachers in the public secondary schools of Australia.

Discussion of results from contextual experiences of overseas trained teachers after obtaining a teaching position in a public secondary school of Western Australia and South Australia illustrated five overarching themes: school based induction and on the job mentoring; pedagogical dissonance and unrealistic expectations of teachers from the school administrators; behaviour management issues; workplace harassment and discrimination; and rewards and acceptance. A majority of the participants believed that the school-based induction process that they received was ineffective and needed improvement. There was no voluntary mentoring process in place for new teachers. Participants from CALD/ NESB cohort faced more pedagogical dissonance and behaviour management issues in comparison to their counterparts from NEST. Three CALD/ NESB participants experienced apparent harassment and discrimination in their workplace, while the remainder did not have such experiences. A majority of the participants felt that their challenges in public secondary schools were contrasted by equally positive and rewarding experiences, for which most of them expressed their gratitude.

Discussion of results from the effects of cultural values on the adaptation process of overseas trained teachers to the public secondary schools of Western Australia and South Australia was organised under three major themes namely: culture shock on overseas trained teachers; experiences of overseas trained teachers from culturally and linguistically diverse and non-English speaking background (CALD/NESB); and experiences of overseas trained teachers from native English speaking background (NEST). An examination of the results revealed that the culture shock of the participants was influenced by the level of their familiarity to the Australian culture. That is, the greater the difference between the Australian culture from the participants' culture at birth, the greater the shock. It appeared that participants tend to hold on to their accustomed cultural values and outlooks long after immigration, often leading to a clash of expectations. Participants from CALD/NESB cohort experienced more contextual challenges in comparison to their NEST counterparts. All four NEST participants were readily accepted in the school community and achieved leadership roles. Overall, the adaptation process to the Australian public secondary schools was easier for NEST participants, in comparison to their CALD/ NESB counterparts.

## **5.9 Conclusion**

Chapter Five provided an interpretive discussion of the results outlined in the previous chapter. The results for each of the three questions were analysed, along with relevant discussion of literature. Discussions focused around evaluating results on contextual experiences of overseas trained teachers before obtaining a teaching position in a public secondary school; contextual experiences of overseas trained teachers after obtaining a teaching position in a public secondary school; and the effects of culture on the adaptation process of overseas trained teachers to the public secondary schools of Western Australia and South Australia. This chapter leads to the final chapter: Chapter Six: Review and Conclusions.

## **Chapter Six: Review and Conclusions**

### **6.1 Introduction**

The purpose of this research was threefold. Firstly, it was to explore the firsthand experiences of overseas trained teachers prior to obtaining a teaching position in an Australian public secondary school. Secondly, it was to look into the different challenges that overseas trained teachers might need to confront, after obtaining a teaching position in an Australian public secondary school. Thirdly, the purpose was to explore and interpret the influences of cultural factors on the adjustment process of overseas trained teachers to their new teaching environments. The epistemology underpinning this instrumental case study was constructivism with an interpretive paradigm of qualitative research. The chosen theoretical perspective of this study was symbolic interactionism. The data were gathered through in-depth semi-structured interviews and field notes by me. The data analysis complied with the guidelines provided by Miles and Hubermann (1994). The three components of the analytical framework (Miles & Hubermann, 1994) used in this study consisted of data reduction, data display and drawing and verifying conclusions.

Three specific research questions underpinned this inquiry.

1. What are the contextual experiences faced by overseas trained teachers prior to obtaining a teaching position in a public secondary school of Western Australia and South Australia?
2. What are the contextual experiences faced by overseas trained teachers after obtaining a teaching position in a public secondary school of Western Australia and South Australia?
3. How do overseas trained teachers' cultural values and perspectives affect their adjustment processes to the public secondary schools of Western Australia and South Australia?

The three specific research questions are answered in relation to the discussions in Chapter Five. The discussion of the data in Chapter Five was reinforced by a critical

reflection of relevant literature. The following section addresses the responses to specific research questions proposed by this inquiry.

## **6.2 Research questions answered**

### *6.2.1 What are the contextual experiences faced by overseas trained teachers prior to obtaining a teaching position in a public secondary school of Western Australia and South Australia?*

The results of this research indicate that the contextual experiences of overseas trained teachers before obtaining a teaching position in a public secondary school of Western Australia and South Australia can be divided into four categories. The four categories are: perceived lack of in-depth information on post immigration life in Australia; teacher registration and English language requirements in the states of Western Australia and South Australia; lifestyle changes and relocation for permanency; and the teacher orientation process. Each of these categories will now be discussed.

A majority of the participants observed that they did not receive enough information on post-immigration life in Australia. The participants indicated that more clarity of information on everyday life in Australia would have helped them significantly. One of the participants also suggested that the provision of an "information pack" detailing all the obligations and avenues of available support might be helpful in the initial establishment of overseas trained teachers in Australia. Apart from the lack of information, one participant reflected that there might have been instances where overseas trained teachers become victims of misinformation on teaching locations in rural and remote parts of Australia. A majority of the participants claimed that the Education Department websites of the two states of Western Australia and South Australia did not clearly depict the reality of the working conditions in any of the rural and the remote locations.

Participants highlighted that the two states of Western Australia and South Australia had different requirements for teacher registration and English language



competence. For example, while First Aid Certification was compulsory in South Australia for teacher registration, Western Australia did not have this requirement as of 2015. Three participants reflected that on occasions there could be delays in scrutinizing paperwork for teacher registration in the two states. Such delays due to registration red-tapes caused these teachers mental and financial distress. Results from this study in accompaniment with the review of the literature indicate that as of 2015, overseas trained teachers in Western Australia did not have to appear for an English language test other than IELTS, (which often formed part of the immigration process itself). However, overseas trained teachers in South Australia had to prove their English language competence at the discretion of the Teacher Registration Board of South Australia. From the experiences of participants, it also appeared that as of 2015, the teacher registration process for overseas trained teachers in Western Australia was faster in comparison to that of South Australia.

A majority of the participants recalled that they had to relocate to the rural and remote regions of the two states of Western Australia and South Australia, in order to commence their teaching careers. Participants reflected that this relocation caused them personal distress, as they had to move away from family and friends often into isolated locations. Participants' experiences, along with the review of the literature, indicate that while the Education Department of Western Australia offered permanent, ongoing positions to its teachers for opting to teach in country locations, as well as the provision of generous incentives, no such offers were made to teachers in South Australia. The participants from South Australia felt frustrated with the continuous offer of fixed term teaching positions, which prevented them from making long term commitments. In addition, remoteness of the country locations and unavailability of basic resources also caused concern to the participants. However, one participant did manage to transform his regional isolation in Western Australia into a creative venture, by undertaking social projects after hours. This particular experience of this participant suggests that irrespective of circumstances, personal attitude and outlook might well play an important role in shaping the professional experiences of overseas trained teachers in the public secondary schools of Western Australia and South Australia.

The results indicate that the Education Department orientation policies for new teachers (both local and overseas trained), varied in Western Australia between the years 2000-2015. As a result, only three participants could avail the opportunity to attend teacher orientation programmes, while the rest missed out. The three participants from Western Australia who attended teacher orientation indicated that such programs had a significant influence on their preparedness and confidence as teachers. In addition, the results suggested that the three participants who received orientation in Western Australia, faced fewer challenges in their schools, in comparison to those that were sent directly to their classrooms without teacher orientation. All three participants from South Australia confirmed that they did not receive any orientation. As of 2015, it appeared that the Education Departments of Western Australia and South Australia did not have mandatory policies for ongoing teacher orientation.

#### *6.2.2 What are the contextual experiences faced by overseas trained teachers after obtaining a teaching position in a public secondary school of Western Australia and South Australia?*

An examination of the data suggests that the contextual experiences of overseas trained teachers after obtaining a teaching position in a public secondary school of Western Australia and South Australia can be divided into five categories. These five categories are: school-based induction and on the job mentoring; classroom expectations and pedagogical dissonance; behaviour management issues; workplace harassment and discrimination; and rewards and acceptance. Each of these categories will now be discussed.

A majority of the participants did not have an effective school-based induction in their schools. One participant observed that even though most schools put efforts into conducting induction programs for new teachers (both local and overseas trained) at the beginning of the year, yet conducting a mid-year induction might appear to be "an issue" for some schools. In addition, participants observed that a great deal was expected of new overseas trained teachers as often these teachers had to take charge of their duties and responsibilities often without adequate support or

resources. The participants' experiences also suggest that there was no mandatory mentoring process for new teachers (both local and overseas trained) in place. Some participants were fortunate to receive support from helpful colleagues, while others had no collegial support whatsoever. The results suggested that mentoring could be most helpful for the adaptation process of overseas trained teachers in the public secondary schools. However, as of 2015, there was no Education Department policy towards a mandatory implementation of a mentoring process for new teachers (both local and overseas trained).

Almost all participants from a culturally and linguistically diverse and non-English speaking background (CALD/NESB), claimed to have experienced pedagogical dissonance. These participants' (CALD/NESB) experience of pedagogical dissonance was due to different classroom expectations and teaching practices from those which they were accustomed in their countries of birth. These teaching practices and classroom expectations were different from that of teaching in the Australian curriculum. For example, most of the participants in this group indicated that they could not condone what they believed as the casual and disrespectful attitude of some students towards their education. Two participants thought that such attitude of the students might have developed due to the fact, that in Australia, students' future careers and lifestyle did not necessarily depend on their academic excellence. A majority of the CALD/NESB participants also believed that too much affluence might have led students to undermine their readily available facilities and even lead to vandalising public property. These participants felt that some students disrespected and disregarded some of their "material privileges", which may not be available to students in some other countries. In addition, two other participants were surprised that they were asked to teach subjects outside the areas of their expertise, especially without prior warning. This experience became a challenge for these participants, who felt overwhelmed at the prospect.

Classroom behaviour management of students was an issue for a majority of the participants, especially for those from CALD/NESB. A majority of the participants from this group of teachers were surprised by the behaviour of Australian students,

as they were not used to such behaviour in their previous teaching experiences in their home countries. The CALD/NESB participants were even more surprised to realise that there were almost no consequences for what they considered to be abusive behaviour of the students towards their teachers. Participants reflected that classroom behaviour management rested solely with a classroom teacher and it was looked upon as one of the most essential and basic criteria for teacher competence. Participants recalled that they had to be highly creative in managing their classes. The results also implied that student behaviour management might also be an issue for all school staff, including the school administrative personnel.

Some participants experienced a lack of support and also faced workplace harassment and discrimination from other members of staff. The results implied that harassment and apparent discriminatory behaviour of school staff might force overseas trained teachers to leave their teaching positions. Furthermore, results indicated that collegial acceptance of overseas trained teachers was one of the main determining factors for their successful teaching careers in public secondary schools. Two participants thought that quite often the blame for the poor academic performance of the students was solely directed at them. In this respect the participants thought that their schools failed to take into consideration the capabilities of certain students in achieving a particular standard of performance. In addition, the participants reflected that whenever the students did not want to engage in classroom activities, they often blamed the situation on their apparent inability to "understand" overseas teachers' varied accents. Furthermore, one participant claimed to have issues with his HOLA due to his (the participant's) insistence on not socialising after hours. This finding suggested that the wider educational community might have some difficulty in accepting cultural diversity and differences in the outlook of overseas trained teachers.

Irrespective of multiple negative experiences, all the participants reflected on their positive and rewarding experiences in Australia. Most of the participants appreciated the weather, beaches and the lovely people of Australia. Participants believed that Australia had provided their families with better futures. The

participants also cherished the generous salaries, incentives, holidays and lifestyle that were provided to them through their teaching careers in the public secondary schools of Western Australia and South Australia. Moreover, they thought that some policies of the Education Department of the two states of Western Australia and South Australia were very progressive and humane. In this respect participants highlighted policies such as: relief payments for taking extra classes; the option of claiming back all associated educational costs as part of a tax return; and worker's compensation for unfortunate accidents at the workplace. Two CALD/NESB participants observed that their demanding and challenging teaching experiences in Australia had transformed them to become better teachers and also better human beings.

### *6.2.3 How do overseas trained teachers' cultural values and perspectives affect their adjustment processes to the public secondary schools of Western Australia and South Australia?*

An exploration of results on the effects of cultural values and perspectives on the adjustment process of overseas trained teachers to the public secondary schools of Western Australia and South Australia identified three categories of information. The three categories are: culture shock on overseas trained teachers; experiences of overseas trained teachers from culturally and linguistically diverse and a non-English speaking background; and experiences of overseas trained teachers from a native English speaking background. Each of these categories will now be discussed.

The results suggested that the participants' experience of culture shock was greatly influenced by their level of familiarity with the Australian culture. That is, the more different the participants' culture at birth from the Australian culture, the more the participants experienced culture shock. Many participants continued to hold on to their accustomed beliefs and values long after their migration to Australia. As such, they had difficulty in adjusting to the Australian culture. For example, two CALD/NESB participants suggested that they needed to adjust their values and expectations, in order to adapt to the Australian culture. The socioeconomic conditions of the country of upbringing commanded a significant impact on the

personal values of the participants. A majority of the CALD/NESB participants grew up experiencing poverty and as a result, had difficulty in accepting what they considered to be careless and often destructive attitudes of some students towards their facilities. One participant suggested that some students in Australia tend to believe in the effectiveness of education only if it could be linked to future monetary gains. This perceived understanding came as a surprise to the participant, as he was unaccustomed to such an outlook. In spite of experiences of initial challenges, the examples of two participants illustrate that individual capabilities, personal beliefs, positive perspectives and determination might play important roles in the adaptation process of the participants to the public secondary schools of Australia.

The results indicated that CALD/NESB participants experienced major contextual challenges in multiple areas. These challenges included: pedagogical dissonance; student behaviour management; culture shock and even workplace harassment and discrimination. Results suggest that most of these experiences were due to these participants' lack of familiarity with the dominant Australian culture and pedagogical expectations. CALD/NESB participants claimed that part of their challenging experiences were also caused by their lack of acceptance by the wider educational community. CALD/NESB participants also indicated that cultural dissonance and lack of support often caused stress in their adaptation process to the public secondary schools.

On the other hand the results indicate that native English speaking participants (NEST) did not have to face major contextual challenges, due to their familiarity with the Australian culture. Most of the participants in this group of overseas trained teachers (NEST) came from countries with similar cultural and pedagogical expectations as that of Australia and hence, adaptation to Australian public secondary schools was easier for them. Unlike their CALD/NESB counterparts, these participants found ready acceptance in the wider school community and all of them were successful in achieving leadership positions quite early in their careers. The results from the study, along with a discussion of literature illustrated that success was comfortably achievable for this group of teachers (NEST), as they could

be identified with the concept of the proverbial "good teacher" (Inglis & Philips, 1995, p.xi). However, even in the midst of all the favourable contextual circumstances, these participants' professional capabilities and personal attributes also seemed to have been crucial co-contributors to their successes.

### **6.3 Benefits and limitations of the Research Design**

There are two benefits of the research design: first, the constructivist perspective acknowledges the place of the researcher and that perfectly suited my position as a researcher and a currently serving overseas trained teacher. Secondly, the chosen research design also allowed me to put forward the much valued 'voice' of the participants of this study. The two limitations were already discussed in chapter 1 and they were: possible existence of personal bias due to my position as an insider researcher; and a limited number of research participants due to circumstantial constraints.

### **6.4 Knowledge added to the field of Study**

This thesis added knowledge to the field of study in the following ways. First, the study highlighted the differences of contextual experiences of two diverse groups of overseas trained teachers: teachers from culturally and linguistically diverse and non-English speaking background (CALD/NESB); and that of teachers from native English speaking background (NEST). The study discussed in-depth the variety of reasons that lead to the differences of experiences for these two groups of overseas trained teachers. Secondly, the analysis of experiences of at least two participants from the two above mentioned groups of overseas trained teachers highlighted that personal goal setting, beliefs and attitudes, coupled with a positive disposition of mind might go a long way in achieving success for overseas trained teachers, irrespective of their backgrounds. Lastly, this thesis is the only known study on the current topic, where the researcher was also an overseas trained teacher currently (2016) working in her teaching position in a public school of Western Australia. My own 13 years of experience in teaching Western Australian public schools, both in rural and metropolitan areas added an 'insider' perspective to the study. As a result of

this interesting opportunity, I could simultaneously authenticate, compare and emphasise with my research participants. In addition, whenever necessary, I could put forward relevant probing questions to the participants to explore further in-depth. All these factors make this study unique in its own merit.

## **6.5 Conclusion**

This study was concerned with an exploration of the contextual experiences of overseas trained teachers before and after obtaining a teaching position in a public secondary school of Western Australia and South Australia, in relation to their cultural attributes. The motivation behind the study was to understand the different contextual issues that overseas trained teachers faced while trying to adapt to the public secondary schools of Western Australia and South Australia. By taking such an initiative, this study endeavoured to bring overseas teachers' issues and challenges to the forefront, with an aspiration of improving the contextual and professional experiences of future overseas trained teachers.

## **6.6 Implications of the study**

The results from the study have implications for the following groups or individuals:

1. Education Departments of Western Australia and South Australia.
2. Future policy makers for teacher orientation and mentoring programs.
3. Aspirant overseas trained teachers.
4. Future researchers.

The context of the study was based in the two states of Western Australia and South Australia. The information provided in this study has implications for the Education Departments of these two states. In-depth understanding of the challenges and issues faced by overseas trained teachers might help the Education Departments of these two states to formulate effective policies to improve the quality of these



teachers' contextual experiences. The results suggested that not enough information was provided by the Education Department websites on the post immigration lives in Australia, teacher registration requirements and the contextual reality of working in certain locations. As a result of such lack of information, overseas trained teachers faced many contextual challenges. Through an understanding of the challenges faced by the participants of this research, the Education Departments of Western Australia and South Australia might recognise the importance of providing comprehensive and authentic contextual information on all required areas on their websites. Moreover, they might also make a commitment to update their websites continually for the benefit of all teachers, including those from overseas.

Future policy makers on teacher training might perceive the results in this study informative and useful. The study has highlighted the importance of teacher orientation and ongoing mentoring programs for new overseas trained teachers. The results suggested that orientation and ongoing mentoring of overseas trained teachers has a positive effect on these teachers' wellbeing, preparedness and confidence. Policy makers within the Education Departments of the two states of Western Australia and South Australia might consider implementing mandatory policies on providing comprehensive teacher orientation programs. In addition, they might consider implementing ongoing mentoring of new overseas trained teachers, for at least the first two years of service.

The study depicted important contextual information for future aspirant overseas trained teachers. In particular, this study has attempted to portray a comprehensive picture of what it is like to be working as an overseas trained teacher in an Australian public secondary school. The in-depth depiction of real life experiences of the participants in this study might help future aspirant overseas trained teachers to make informed decisions on migrating to Australia. Furthermore, this information might help overseas aspirant teachers prepare culturally and psychologically to take on teaching positions in Australian public secondary schools.

Future researchers, interested in further research on experiences of overseas trained teachers can use the results presented in this research as a base for seeking future directions. This research suggests two directions for future studies. First, a comparative and more in-depth study might be conducted on the experiences of overseas trained teachers in all the states and territories of Australia. Such a study might provide a relative and comprehensive picture of overseas trained teachers' experiences throughout the states and territories of Australia. Moreover, it might help officials monitor, record and implement proven and workable strategies to assist and retain these teachers in the workforce. Secondly, research might be conducted on formulating effective strategies for faster assimilation and acculturation of overseas trained teachers in the Australian education community. Such policies once implemented, might also be applicable in the assimilation of other immigrants in the mainstream Australian society.

## **6.7 Recommendations**

Four recommendations came to the forefront from the results of this research. These recommendations will now be presented.

The first recommendation is that the Education Departments of the states of Western Australia and South Australia update their websites with information for the benefit of all teachers, especially those from overseas. Information might consist of registration requirements, the timeline for registration, post immigration life in Australia, values and pedagogical expectations in Australian schools and realistic depictions of life in the rural and remote locations of the two states. This information will help aspiring overseas trained teachers to be mentally prepared before migrating to Australia.

The second recommendation is that the Education Departments of the two states of Western Australia and South Australia conduct effective, ongoing teacher orientation and school-based induction for new overseas trained teachers, before they

take on their classroom responsibilities. Provisions for school-based inductions on a smaller scale might be considered if teachers join a public secondary school in the middle of an academic year. Effective teacher orientation and school-based induction will help in promoting confidence and preparedness in the minds of overseas trained teachers.

The third recommendation is that overseas trained teachers be given a lighter workload for the first year of their service in a public secondary school. New graduate teachers in Western Australia and South Australia already receive this exemption from a full teaching load for their first year of service. Irrespective of the years of experience abroad, overseas trained teachers could also benefit significantly from a lighter teaching load during their first year of service. Such consideration might provide overseas trained teachers with extra time and pace to adjust to the Australian pedagogical system. In addition, this consideration might also help these teachers to assimilate faster to the wider educational community.

The fourth recommendation is the provision of mentoring programs for overseas trained teachers during the first two years of teaching in Australian public secondary schools. Areas of mentoring might consist of extending suggestions, feedback, lesson monitoring, resource sharing, assessment moderation, sharing of effective strategies on student behaviour management and confidential discussions with the mentor on any area of concern, both professional and personal. New overseas trained teachers might be provided with an opportunity to choose mentors from one of the senior members of staff with whom they feel comfortable. This support might create a significant positive impact on the adaptation process of overseas trained teachers to the public secondary schools of Western Australia and South Australia.

## **6.8 Personal Impact Statement**

This research has had a meaningful impact on me. As a CALD/NESB overseas trained teacher working in public secondary schools of Western Australia for thirteen years, I was interested in exploring other overseas trained teachers' experiences in adapting to and working in Australian public secondary schools. While conducting this research, I had the opportunity to know and appreciate the courageous professional journeys of the participants and compare them to my own experiences. Such comparisons encouraged me to look at my own professional experiences with a new perspective and be deeply grateful for all the positive professional experiences that came my way. Through this research I aimed to provide an opportunity for the voices of the overseas trained teachers to be heard and their concerns raised and hopefully addressed. It is my sincere hope that this research will contribute towards improving the quality of future contextual experiences of beginning overseas trained teachers in the Australian public secondary schools.

## **Appendix A**

### **Questions for Semi-Structured Interview**

Q1. Please tell me a bit about yourself.

(Please include background information about the country of your origin, family, professional training, the educational system back home, values etc).

Q2. When did you come to WA? Did you teach anywhere else in Australia before coming to WA? Please explain your initial experiences of the first public school that you taught in WA.

Q3. How did that experience differ from your initial expectation? Why did you have that kind of expectation? How did you react?

Q4. What have been some of the most critical barriers (challenges) that have impacted on your success as a teacher in your current school? To what extent do you feel you have been able to overcome these challenges? (If yes), How have you overcome these barriers (challenges)?

Q5. Did all the management strategies as advised by your workplace authorities (School and Behaviour Management policies) work? What worked and what did not? Why do you think some of those strategies didn't work?

Q6. What have been the most positive or enabling factors that have impacted on your success as a teacher in your current school?

Q7. How might the personal attributes of a teacher affect the successful implementation of strategies?

Q8. Did you need to make any lifestyle change or adjustments in order to adapt to your teaching profession in WA? What were those?

Q9. What kind of initial support did you get from the school authorities? Did you get the help of any mentor? How effective do you think the induction process was? What are your suggestions for improvement?

Q10. Is there any additional information on teaching in WA you would have liked to receive before coming here?

Q11. From your own point of view, what do you think of the contribution of overseas trained teachers towards the education system of WA? What are the impacts?

Q12. What advice would you give to overseas trained teachers moving from an overseas school to teach in a secondary school in WA?

## **APPENDIX B.**

### **Research Information and participant consent form**

#### **Study Title: Experiences faced by Overseas Trained Teachers in WA Public Schools**

Dear Teacher

You are cordially invited to take part in an Ed.D research project based at the School of Education, Murdoch University. The purpose of this research project is to learn more about the experiences of the Overseas Trained Teachers working in WA public schools. My selected topic has not been widely researched so far (especially in WA) and therefore this study can make the community aware of the challenges faced and the contributions made by the Overseas Trained Teachers towards the smooth running of the public schools in this state. It might also cater for an environment of increased mutual respect and tolerance in the community. Other possibilities include fostering a multicultural awareness in the community, which is very much in tune with the true Australian spirit (<http://www.crsaaustralia.gov.au>). As an Overseas Trained Teacher, you are in a position to provide me with unique insights into this situation, and I would appreciate it if I could interview you.

The format of the interview will be a discussion of teaching experiences. I expect that the interview will take between 45 minutes to an hour. With your permission, I will audiotape the interview solely for the purposes of accurately transcribing the conversation. The audio tapes as well as the transcriptions will be stored securely at Murdoch University for the period of five years, following the research guidelines of the University.

The participants will be given feedback on the final thematic outcomes of the research and then any excerpt or quote that will be used for publication will be

finalized only after seeking the participants' permission. The research will in no way put any of the participants at risk as their personal identities and even the name of their institutions will be confidential. This research will in no way pose a risk to institutional or workplace relationships.

Should you decide at any time during the interview or discussion that you no longer wish to participate, you may withdraw your consent without any prejudice. You may also decide not to answer any of the questions posed during the interview and you will also have the choice to stop recording should you wish to discuss issues off the record.

There are no direct costs or benefits for you with regard to your participation in this research. However, your participation will contribute to a greater awareness of the efforts and contributions of the Overseas Trained Teachers in public schools of WA and will help in gathering data to put forward the stories of the teachers' challenges and successes to the desired audience. My final report could potentially be published online as well as in educational journals and your participation will help to bring greater attention to the issues and concerns facing the Overseas Trained Teachers in WA.

If you have any questions or would like to receive further information about the project, please contact me or my supervisors, Dr Nado Aveling or Dr. Deborah PinoPasternak, in the School of Education, , Murdoch University, South Street Campus, Western Australia 6150. Phone Number: 61 (08) 9360 6000.

Thanking you

Kind regards

Sushmita Datta Roy (Researcher)



## Form of Consent

I confirm that the purpose of the research, the study procedures, the possible risks and discomforts as well as benefits have been explained to the participant. All questions have been answered. The participant has agreed to participate in the study.

---

Signature of Researcher

---

Date

The participant agrees to be audio-taped YES/ NO \_\_\_\_\_

The participant would like his/her name to be used YES /NO \_\_\_\_\_

The participant agreed for accounts of his/her case to be included in the researcher's dissertation, as well as presentations and published materials YES/ NO-----

The participant agreed for anonymous quotes of his/her data to be included in the researcher's dissertation, as well as presentations and published materials

YES/ NO

---

Participant Signature

---

Date

---

Participant Name Printed.

## **Appendix C**

### **Counselling advice for the research participants from the University psychologist**

From: "John Gardiner" <J.Gardiner@murdoch.edu.au>

Date: 8 September 2012 10:11:22 AM AWST

To: "Linda Lau" <L.Lau@murdoch.edu.au>, <DATTA ROY Sushmita [Comet Bay College] [mailto:Sushmita.Dattaroy@education.wa.edu.au]>

Subject: Re: Permission from Psychology Clinic

Please accept this email as acceptance in regard to the inclusion of the psychology clinic as an agency available for those that may be adversely affected by participation in the proposed research. Fees would be waived for such referrals.

John Gardiner

Clinical Psychology Program

Murdoch University

## Appendix D

### Human Ethics Approval for the research



www.murdoch.edu.au

**Research Ethics Office**  
Division of Research and Development

Monday, 24 September 2012

Dr Nado Aveling  
School of Education  
Murdoch University

Chancellery Building  
South Street  
MURDOCH WA 6150  
Telephone: 9360 6677  
Facsimile: 9360 6686  
human.ethics@murdoch.edu.au  
www.research.murdoch.edu.au/ethics

Dear Nado,

**Project No.** 2012/060  
**Project Title** Experiences faced by Overseas Trained Teachers in WA Public Schools

Thank you for addressing the conditions placed on the above application to the Murdoch University Human Research Ethics Committee. On behalf of the Committee, I am pleased to advise the application is now:

**APPROVED, with advice**

Advice is offered that the Information letter should be proof read for grammatical errors e.g. "The questions that will guide the interview has [have] been divided into four sections ..." and that the supervisor's email should be included in the Information letter.

Approval is granted on the understanding that research will be conducted according to the standards of the *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research* (2007), the *Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research* (2007) and Murdoch University policies at all times. You must also abide by the Human Research Ethics Committee's standard conditions of approval (see attached). All reporting forms are available on the Research Ethics web-site.

I wish you every success for your research.

Please quote your ethics project number in all correspondence.

Kind Regards,

Dr. Erich von Dietze  
Manager of Research Ethics

cc: Dr Deborah Pino-Pasternak  
Sushmita Datta Roy

HREC Outright Approval Letter 16012012

CRICOS Provider Code: 001251  
ABN 61 616 369 313

### Human Research Ethics Committee: Standard Conditions of Approval

- a) The project must be conducted in accordance with the approved application, including any conditions and amendments that have been approved. You must comply with all of the conditions imposed by the HREC, and any subsequent conditions that the HREC may require.
- b) You must report immediately anything which might affect ethical acceptance of your project, including:
  - *Adverse effects on participants*
  - *Significant unforeseen events*
  - *Other matters that might affect continued ethical acceptability of the project.*
- c) Where approval has been given pending copies of documents such as letters of support / consent from other organisations or approvals from third parties, these must be provided to the Research Ethics Office before the research may commence at each relevant location.
- d) Proposed changes or amendments to the research must be applied for, using an Amendment Application form, and approved by the HREC before these may be implemented.
- e) An annual Report must be provided by the due date specified each year (usually the anniversary of approval) for the project to have continuing approval.
- f) A closure report must be provided at the conclusion of the project.
- g) If, for any reason, the project does not proceed or is discontinued, you must advise the committee in writing, using a Closure Report form.
- h) If an extension is required beyond the approved end date of the project, an extension application should be made allowing sufficient time for its consideration by the committee. Extensions cannot be granted retrospectively.
- i) You must advise the HREC immediately, in writing, if any complaint is made about the conduct of the project.
- j) Any equipment used must meet current safety standards. Purpose built equipment must be tested and certified by independent experts for compliance with safety standards.
- k) Higher degree students must have both Candidacy and Program of Study approved prior to commencing data collection.
- l) You must notify the Research Ethics Office of any changes in contact details including address, phone number and email address.
- m) The HREC may conduct random audits and / or require additional reports concerning the research project.

**Failure to comply with the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (2007) and with the conditions of approval may result in the suspension or withdrawal of approval for the project.**

*The HREC seeks to support researchers in achieving strong results and positive outcomes.*

*The HREC promotes a research culture in which ethics is considered and discussed at all stages of the research.*

*If you have any issues you wish to raise, please contact the Research Ethics Office in the first instance.*

HREC Outright Approval Letter 16012012

CRICOS Provider Code: 001253  
ABN 61 616 369 313

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